

DEWDROP'S TRANSLATION OF THE HOMESTUCK CLASSPECT SYSTEM, FOR BOTH ARTICULATING SELF-REFLECTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL UTILITY

Q: tldr wtf is this

A list of personality "classes" from Homestuck, meant to help people identify friends and themselves. Knowing the comic is irrelevant, but I will keep that kind of chatter (along with my more personal anecdotes) in this style of text.

Q: sorry this is a psychoanalysis thing based on what again

Homestuck is a webcomic about a couple dozen teenagers finding themselves and what they believe in (and brutally murdering Betty Crocker). Among the misadventures, a large crux of the comic is a personality system - which seems to draw inspiration from a few sources, though Jung's personality system the heaviest. I know his work's contentious, and I don't know everything Andrew Hussie read (hell, maybe no Jung involved at all and they just found similar conclusions), but I can say this stuff seems to apply to reality. It covers a lot of bases, and while it's not the be-all-end-all of psychology, it still covers enough to be useful - and what it does cover can be unsettlingly accurate, what with how many surface traits lead back to the same inner turmoils, justifications, and speeches. While I'll keep the flavourful terms like "Derse" and "Prospit", and the medieval fantasy titles, I stand by this system being applicable to real people - you, and anyone you know.

Q: what if two classes seem to fit me? am i both? maybe the test is dumb and you shouldn't be taking a webcomic that seriously

I clear up confusions, and others in your circle will spot you better than skeptics can themselves; though, in the comic, the character Sollux is shown as being both Prospit and Derse, but it's unclear if this is due to his bipolar condition or "two of everything" theme. Beyond that, the system has demonstrated a remarkable capability to whittle people's philosophies to inarguable cores, ascertain what secrets and complexes they're predisposed to hide from people, and predict their paths for development or downfall. I appreciate skepticism, but the fact that human psychology is a contentious field does not mean systems are impossible - while the classpect system is not truly absolute, and may be simplifying the truth, there is still truth. I do await anyone who truly has "changed" or exempted from the system - even through drug use, which would be neat. I am, however, very tired of what are clearly Princes trying to avoid their label through Princey arguments. I'll get to them.

Q: what's the point?

Whatever you want; we're whittling down and highlighting the impulses of what individual people consider artistically and spiritually resonant. I'd argue it's about empowering the voice of an individual's creative spirit, while making them more resilient to hard times and trauma that may have influenced them. I am, however, predisposed to believe things like that, so your mileage may vary. I will make judgements based on the basic principles of "Be excellent to each other", "Treat people the way you want to be treated", and "Labels that point out bad habits should have us reconsider bad habits and not labels".

Q: so where'd all these descriptions come from if the comic didn't explain everything

My initial source: <https://homestuckexamination.tumblr.com/post/168160703234/homestuck-mythological-class-quiz>. Ultimately I found it too mystical in certain places, and in others simply failing to acknowledge the real complexities of why certain classes are what they are. Homestuck and its spin offs are obviously major sources too, but absolute standard, is the real people I've met. Young and old, rich or poor, fans or strangers, I've done my best to have a large sample size and corroborate with others.

Q: the comic says some are gender specific. are they?

I'm keeping the door open, but some seem to be AFAB and AMAB locked. Doesn't matter. Trans rights are human rights. If the only way to get a Princess is through a Prince becoming a transwoman, I say it's as valid (and cool) as a Pokemon that only evolves through trading. Thinking a new identity needs a new class is wishful thinking, when we can focus on redefining what our class means to ourselves. When we make facts shackles, we give ammunition to our enemies, and weaken our words to ourselves and those around us.

Q: you use semicolons too much

Probably; I type how I talk - impatient and improvised. If I don't, sounds too stilted; every sentence trips into another. Occupational hazard.

HELLO (IT BEGINS)

Welcome to the Brochure. Here's what will be covered:

Aspects: The delicious contrasting flavours of "what the world is all about", 12 in total.

Class: The precise breed of obligations and self hatred that define us, in 16 archetypes, defined by 8 paired sets and 4 tiers of escalation in regards to intensity.

Hey, "tiers" don't mean "quality" here; everyone's got a purpose, no one asks for any of this. I'm just describing them in this order to show trace calmer impulses into all consuming ones, which I feel is an easier narrative to digest then shrinking things down. A class being wilder and more ambitious doesn't make it morally better or worse - more unsafe, definately, but that's something to live with. You stuff it down, and I'll have every way you fail and relapse down in *print*.

Defining classpects as a see-saw was an interesting model. I've seen a few. They're all wrong, mostly due to adding too much myth to the Master classes, and trying to build around them. I will make my case as best I can, but I also wanted to mention a friend of mine (who wanted to be anonymous, but still wanted credit) who came up with a better model. See, she figures low intensity classes are another kind of "extreme" as much as the high intensity ones, and devised her own model: basically, a globe. Cut it into quarters like an orange, and they'd represent active attunement, passive attunement, active adaptation, and passive adaptation, with the lowest and highest intensity at either end. It's a nice way of having true parity, not implying any kind of "true middle" (it doesn't exist), and pointing out that high extremes and low extremes have alot in common where a see saw would put everything else between them. She's clever. I like her.

Sway: Prospit and Derse: fancy words for which people are emotionally open, and which people live in a permanent state of "just kidding haha unless?" with cries for help sprinkled in for flavour. All classes will feature a further examination of the Prospit and Derse varients, and how it colours their behavior into more specific idiosyncrasies.

Just mentally replace it with "Order" and "Chaos" respectively if you want, but I think it'd be pretentious now to invent new words when so much here is dependent on Homestuck proper. I'm here to build and extrapolate Hussie's work, not hijack it, and I'm perfectly proud of the effort I've exerted here anyways. I got too many people in my life telling me I should make this more "mine" - my signature's written all over this for anyone to notice, in every way I care about measuring.

Inversion: In which it is revealed 50% of your time has been wasted in regards to aspects and classes, but we gotta build up to it. Don't worry, Prospit and Derse are still static.

My only issue with the globe model is that it implies and even more inverted-inversion, where the see-saw (or rather, a properly organized see saw) better illustrates into how

standard-inversion functions. I mean in the globe model, they're touching now, so I guess...blah, use whatever model you want, so long as we understand what we're talking about - and no, I have no arguments with the aspect wheel.

Let's get this ball rolling.

ASPECTS

(MOODS, VIBES, MEMES)

An "aspect" is the nickname given to a general group of values and concepts that the brain locks into, seemingly for the rest of its life past childhood. While unique human experiences will vary the conclusions, specific language and political leanings, the *tone* is consistent; recognizing our own and others is valuable. While this obviously doesn't exclude anyone's ability to appreciate certain ideas, there have been no examples of someone shaking their default and most pure compulsions - reinvention is possible and encouraged, but the framework remains. Of course, life is more interesting when it's not monotone; appreciate the words of your friends and family, and we are made more versatile for it. Solipsism is awfully limiting, after all.

Seriously, I've asked *alot* of people about this! Invasive questions, calm questions, young people, old people, other people's opinions on these people over the years, I STILL haven't found any exceptions.

Remember, you're looking for what you resonate or "vibe" with here, with the opposite feeling kinda antagonistic - if you're indifferent, using both sides interchangeably and without a favourite/fear, it's not your axis. Ultimately, aspects are what we care about beyond our immediate self interest, what we aspire to, and what we spiritually respond to...so yeah, irrational obsessions. It's what makes us human, ain't it?

Actually if your response is a flat neutral or excited fervor at multiples (especially if it's *without* mistrust/hesitation at the opposition), stick around till the end. You've still got one, but it's going to take *awhile* to explain.

TIME: Destruction, Determination, Willpower, Spite, Hunger, Death, Mechanisms, Material Reality, Inevitability, Endings, Conflict, Raw Function, Heat, Meat, Tempo,

SPACE: Creation, Choice, Creative Expression, Will of the Universe, Surrender, Art, Ambience, Meditation, Candy, Detachment, Abstraction, Dreams, Cold, Acceptance

The rawest and most existential nub of human experience: "I exist, and someday I won't." Good and bad are completely irrelevant - it's all just is and isn't, will or won't, noise and silence, impermanence and mortality. It has a certain terror to it, but it's still unhealthy to think of it as "Good and Evil" - and there's lots of people in the Homestuck community who do, frustratingly enough. Look, this isn't about enshrining "anger" (that's Rage), this is about enshrining "loud". If you play *either* of them right and stop

worrying, it's a lust for life and embrace of death all at the same time. Regrets only slow you down when there's beauty to appreciate - arson is it's own art.

HEART: Soul, Persona(lity), Passion, Identity, Charisma, Emotion, Romance, Theatre, Relationship Dynamics, Whim, Irrationality, Performance, Narrative by way of Character

MIND: Logic, Reason, Rationality, Consequences, Planning, Allocation, Objectivity, Sequence, Strategy, Prediction, Decisions, Outcome, Chess, Laws that Guide

Kinda funny "Heart" lands between Rage and Time - both very, very aggressive aspects. Ultimately, it's the enshrinement of passion, untamed and proud. Romance gets swept up in that. By the same token, it's funny Mind is next to Space - both about distancing yourself from the physical, both about calm choices, but one for purpose and the other for...I guess thrill? Humans are fucking weird.

HOPE: Belief, Utopia, Ideals, Heroism, Inspiration, Reinvention, Perfection, Religion, Impossability, Suspension of Disbelief, Denial, Sugarcoating, Silver Linings, Optimism,

RAGE: Truth, Harsh Reality, Rigid Structure, Disillusionment, Compromise, Sanity, Memory, Laws that Bind, Dissapointment, Pragmatics, Doubt, Bitterness, Imperfection

Hussie claims "Hope" as the most powerful aspect. There's merit to it. Everything, all of these, are imaginary values and sentiments - so what about the one that's open about it? Just as readily, "Rage" is paradoxically a belief in itself - reality doesn't suck "as a rule", and seeing moral merit in those limitations is dogma in itself.

LIGHT: Information, Fortune, Luck, Explanation, Narrative by way of Meaning, Fate, Coherency, Connection, Holistics, Destiny, Storytelling, Focus, Canon, Cliches,

VOID: , Maybe, I dunno, Omission, Forgotten, Randomness, Guesswork, Theories, Rumors, Myth, (Anti-)Nihilism, Silence, Mystery, Secrets, Irrelevancy, Fanon, Pumpkins

BREATH: The Future, "The Easy Way", Trust in Intuition, Freedom, The Wind, Trailblazing, Individuality, Contentment, Freeflow, Calm, Forgive, Forget, Boredom

BLOOD: The Past, "The Hard Way", Trust in Others, Bonds, Oaths, Promises, Grudges, Family, Judgement, Suffering, Comraderie, Ordeals, Stress, Sacrifice, Debt, Scars, Guilt,

It's odd; if Time and Space are the whittled down basics without any flair, what's that say of the other axis? Moody as it is, between Doom and Rage, Blood still isn't "bad", and Breath is an odd positivity to be between Life and Hope while ultimately transcending both. "Everything is going to work out, don't worry about it" is an oddly...pure, kind of goodness. I like to think of it as the whittled down essentials of morality; to let go, or to punish. Kind of dangerous to hedge all your bets on one...

LIFE: Success, Health, Smiling, Social Obligations, Support, Stability, Harmony, Growth, Appearences, Teamwork, Nature, Nurture, Food, Saftey, Complacency

DOOM: Failure, Sickness, Spiralling, Dysfunction, Isolation, Fatalism, Depression, Coping, Crying, Venting, Rot, Decay, Rest, Reprieve, Resignation, Closure

It seems much more culturally accepted that someone's "healing process" might involve staying at home for awhile, away from everyone, eating a bucket of ice cream and listening to country music. Any person on this particular axis is going to have very, very strong opinions about which is more important, and when it's permissible - but to others, it might feel like "Life" is the only one that matters. Make no mistake, every aspect has value, and it's important to know the *romance* in giving up. Failure is a part of life, and it does us good to revel in that sometimes and stop trying to impress everyone; the peace of mind that comes with losing, and knowing you don't have to pretend otherwise.

I've often mused on this (and responded to the understandable skepticism that I'm making a big deal out of nothing) - people sometimes wobble on the aspects clockwise and counter-clockwise, and it's not impossible to see a gradient. Is there truly such a clean split when it comes to people, or at least measured in percentages? It feels right to assume people are messier than 12 defaults, but I've still not seen anyone actually truly pivot to a new primary OR class; that's with a lot of investigating of people young and old, often asking family about certain people in my life. You can trace the same steps, and hear the same cliches, even 40 years ago. People follow blueprints, and if there's any way out, I'd honestly consider it preferable - as is, we play the cards we're dealt.

ATTUNE/ADAPT (WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PROVE?)

Classes don't exist in a vacuum, but there's a gradient in how they deal with "what is right" (AKA their aspect). "Attuning" to an aspect means upholding preset (and occasionally greatly inconvenient) rules to life (and sometimes doing a lot of damage with that lack of accountability); adapting it is to be opinionated and take action in redefining it (which can often mean open selfishness from someone too fussy to let things be). As such, every class can more or less be translated as "someone who [verbs] their aspect". It sounds simplistic, but, at a person's core, it's usually the guiding principle behind a huge swath of their personality and actions, with a horseshoe bent of intensity. To them, they treat "goodness" as inherently:

Easy - Pure - Merit - Static | Variable - Disputable - Subjective - Effort

Which correlates into the class pairs:

Masters - Fae - Servants - Prophets | Magicians - Outlaws - Royals - ???

The associated verbs (more or less) correspond as such:

Command - Create - Exploit - Know | Change - Steal - Destroy - Transform

Or, in other words to get the point across...

**Embody - Grow - Weaponize - Study | Nudge - Fix - Censor -
Mutate**

...Or to be *harsh*...

**Subjugate - Propagate - Bloat - Condone | Tamper - Subvert -
Reject - Corrupt**

With all that in mind, it's time to get to the juicy parts...

...in, just a second. One more thing.

AN APOLOGY IN ADVANCE (SURGERY WITH RUSTY TOOLS)

I need to be clear that this is going to sting. Beyond a certain levity and teasing, there will be hurtful accusations made of both crimes in the past, or the potential future, and I will mark these as symptoms of immutable conditions that we cannot and should not downplay, let alone deny. I will not pretend that there are not more diplomatic alternatives to describing classes, and that my own fixation on confrontation has not influenced my faith in my method - I have my own delusions, after all.

I can say that, no matter what thrills I get in hurting people, I can still give it a point; bad habits, chronic cycles of disfunction, methods of abuse, the languages of self loathing, all of these sore spots are worth hitting by virtue of being *unique*. If I say "this class is heroic and looks out for their friends", then specifications become increasingly blurry by our own aspirations - *everyone* wants to be heroic and look out for their friends. There's a lot of potential here to focus on who we could be, and to make that exciting, but it's too easily lost, squandered, and cheapened if we *lead* with dopamine and celebration. I don't want you to say "Oh, this class looks cool, I wonder if I'm one!" - I want you to say "I'm in this picture and I don't like it" before I get to any compliments. It's unpleasant, but it heightens self-consciousness in the unsure, and weeds out the romantics who would otherwise fuck with my flowcharts.

Even with that in mind, I cannot promise parity; the third paragraph will always be the hardest hitting (even a few of the first ones won't be flattering), but acknowledging a full sum of damage to oneself and those around us still won't be even for everyone. Some classes are higher risk than others, and acknowledging that is important to mitigate that risk (to say nothing of WARNING other people of specific toxicity and excuses). To come to terms with our class, to come to terms with *ourselves*, we cannot use rose-tinted glasses, or pretend the crimes of the past didn't matter or won't happen again. The ugly side of us is the most distinct, the toughest to survive and the trickiest to sanitize - you fight that, you fight your best qualities alongside it. You want someone else's best qualities? Sheesh, go nuts, imitate and be the person you know you're not - but you have to know you're not. I'll have a whole section on discrepancies later, if anyone's still fiesty.

I think I've made my point that if we just want a classpect to "make us sound cool and be fun", we miss the bigger point. We're talking about entire human lives here - the good, the bad, the questions we'll be asking ourselves for decades and in our darkest moments. I'm trying to articulate the question for people who misinterpret it, while mentioning what answers are likely to work and which aren't. It's up to the individual to choose what answer works for them, and some classes have more choice and leeway than others - it's not fair, but it's true. Classes are an anatomy of our wants, fears, and preconceptions; it's hard explaining that it's static for us, and not universal for the people around us. The best way I have to prove that it even *exists* is to hit you in every sore spot, cut every artery, pinch every nerve, all while pointing to the chart. The same things that bother us will not bother other people, and however uncomfortable that makes you feel is one more hint to what your class is.

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PROPHETS

(SPECTATORS, HISTORIANS, BYSTANDERS)

The first step of attunement is the last step of grief: acceptance. That the aspect, the world, simply is; blameless and beautiful, good and bad both. There are obvious limitations, which is difficult to describe to someone who feels fulfilled following the rules without err. It is a quiet faith; when wielded correctly, it permits a field of answers as accurate as they are unpleasant, immutable but highlighting other opportunities. Emboldened, and you've got someone who **knows** more than they should.

MAGES are know-it-all's who never feel the need to prove it, and position themselves in situations where they never have to. Comfortable with isolation, disinterested in praise, awkward at basic social interaction, Mages are often less your friend and more just "around" - barring very, very rare pledges of complete trust so long as they are not betrayed. Most comfortable in personal duties and passion projects, it's often a continued effort from friends to keep them involved; even then, it's a Mage staple to suddenly and abruptly leave conversations without a proper goodbye. They're used to their advice going unheeded, and often aware that their insights are purely personal anyways - but it's still useful, far more than they frame it as. It is a complicated dance to keep them socially involved without either party being frustrated by a Mage's weirdness, penchant for inaction, and distaste for convention...but there's loyalty and conviction in there that the whole world can't take away, with humble perspectives that might be just what you need.

Mulder. I'm talking about Mulder from the X-files. I guess Captain Holt from Brooklyn 99 too. The more people come to grips with that precise kind of weirdo, the better. I know quite a few depictions of atypicals meet the bill, but...well, I'm a living counterpoint, as are many aspies I've aggressively psychoanalyzed. Still, Pages and Mages are awfully close...there might be some commonality, as the isolation and difficulty connecting that comes with that condition tends to lead to Mages. After all, it's hard to attend others when your own place in the world is so consistently tumultuous and a 24/7 problem. Maybe. This is guesswork on my end from the limited evidence, but I at least know Mages who aren't autistic and people who are autistic who aren't Mages, and that's at least enough to kill some stereotypes.

Mages **know** their aspect - appreciate, understand, observe, *that's it*, and purely personally too. They're attuned to the bare minimum, appreciating the greater whole without needing to save the world, their friends, or even themselves. If it goes wrong and screws them over, if it limits them in any way, they don't miss a beat; even if they're proven egregiously incorrect and everything they've fought for and believed in was a lie, they'll probably bounce back in a week tops.

They walk this path of virtue and dignity alone, because they can and no one seems to agree with them (as readily as they'd like) anyways. These beliefs embolden them on their career, hobbies, or other pursuits, which they pursue unerringly. They want little, and what they do want is tied up in their beliefs - the fact that their guiding principles may lean selfish is often a recognized occupational hazard, which they cannot* change and do not want to. Even when it lacks flair or high stakes, their read of their aspect is still something fulfilling and engrossing - it's their simple truths, their inescapable fate, their private passions, their singular instructions to life, the car they expect to break down every now and again, and their parent who won't let them out to play. It just is.

They definately learned that early: "This is life, and there's no changing that." A collection of childhood experiences to numb you to things going wrong...hell, even Sollux as a Mage of Doom can't even die correctly or have an apocalypse he was ready for, can he?

Also, this neutrality often extends to politics; Mages either refuse to get involved, or personally represent the Overton Window. It's not their best quality, I'll admit, but it's more proof they really are people who always try to find truth in the middle of extremes. I'm mentioning this here more out of *hoping* it's not a default.

Without pride, ego, or even much self-loathing to drag them down, Mages are very sharp and accurate with the information that holds them together...but they still, every so often, get it wrong. Their chronic lack of ambition blurs into a lack of responsibility, often standing by while friends suffer from either not knowing the solution or not knowing a reason that suits them. Even if they are persuaded, Mages can be slapdash with fixes from impatience and inflexibility. At it's absolute worst, Mages still haven't bridged their connection with others but act on their behalf regardless; saving people who don't want to be saved, confidently insisting on advice that isn't going to start being right until the Mage actually listens. This usually won't last, but it also won't be clear if the Mage learned anything when the dust settles.

I love my Mage friends, but I've known them long enough to see them go pretty far sometimes - in much more drastic ways than Meulin's broken crack ships. Had some tense arguments. We always bounce back. Mostly. I certainly LOOK for more stakes in my friendships, more bloodied hugs and assurances of true companions, but...it's not that you *don't* get that with Mages, it's just that it's always in their own weird way. If you hang out enough, you pass a threshold where they'd die for you (in certain contexts they agree to). There is zero fanfare.

Prospit Mages live in a state of perpetual contentment. They have a clear interpretation of how to be a good person, and are fairly confident it won't be much trouble - or crowded. Their "perfect approach to life" might sound naive, but the fact that it works for them (and them alone) is the only proof they need...so who are you to attack their happiness? They often have an oddball sense of humor, which might make people a bit uncomfortable but it's completely fine

if they're the only one who laughs at it. Sure, they're agreeable and not likely to take offense to much, but squaring up for direct conflict ends poorly. Whatever the dynamic was before, it can very easily turn into "I'm right, and if you don't see that, I'm leaving". Here's a hint: it's not a bluff. They might be wrong, but it's *never* a bluff. Mages just overall don't care to argue or prove their points, but the Prospit variants seem the least bothered by the resulting scorn, to the point of expecting it. Likewise, they do their best to steer clear of disagreements between friends and withhold weighing in; "principle" is the name of the game.

You meet one, and it's like, you never met anyone like this before. They're weird and static and it's like pulling teeth hanging out with them if they've got more important things to do...and then, you meet another. And then you get recommended Snufkin clips on Youtube. And you realize, people like this just, exist.

Originally, I thought Sollux's more standoffish traits were his Derse side. I'm not always sure. Hell, I hope Hussie knew.

Derse Mages live in a state of perpetual confusion. They grow into their class, and start out with a surprising lack of confidence. They fumble at how to make themselves useful to others, often not sure exactly where they're supposed to be and what they're supposed to do. They may look to others if they lack faith in their own voice, but this is almost always temporary - and should be. No matter how listless or vulnerable they may appear, they're still bizarrely resistant to encouragement; they're going to figure themselves out their way, on their time. Sometimes, this means unceremoniously giving up on what they *thought* their dream was, and wandering towards where they feel they'll be needed in a completely different field with a completely different set of friends and/or family (though at least they're more likely to have friends they listen to). With maturation, they'll find contentment doing what they feel they were "supposed to do" and politely yet firmly reject offers to do anything else or more. Eventually, despite it all, they'll be just the kind of impartial advisor with their own private agenda you'd expect (and that Prospit Mages kinda just *start as*), but with a little more bite.

Meulin is surrounded by a lot of eccentricity that makes her a difficult pick for a "quintessential" Derse Mage. I have my theories on Diemen, but the best example I can pull is Lemonhope, Mob of Mob Psycho 100, or certain depictions of Luigi. At least, those are prominent fictions. I'm happy enough to have a few real ones in my life. They're reliable, and more likely to play video games with me than the Prospits.

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Stoic. No further words needed, no embellishment or exaggeration except to play conciliatory to those confused. The deeper nature of this world provides law and language, distilled from the essence of whispers and wisps; you put your trust in elemental energy, permit it,

and in return are made enigmatic. You have made science of magic most call madness, and document all findings in a study with no conclusion besides the process itself. You are pariah to politics, and the squabbles men make fighting over the shells and scrap secondary always to the greater game afoot - irrelevant, distracted, they shout and you murmur, perpendicular, askew. The Mage in their tower; still stoic, static, stressed at requests of the inept. If they wanted to know, why not look? Even if you alone know, even if you would, nothing changes, nothing could. Not what they want, at least, expecting the fact to meet fiction in parity. Real magic isn't like that - but as addendum and not absolute, application is attainable, and atrophies affixed apathy.

Recite what you know, but be open to surprises.

Oh, yeah, you're currently reading the version of this document with my bad poetry attached. I'll make another one eventually that keeps things cleaner, for those interested - I know I'm pushing it with 3 fonts.

I dunno. It feels right. Skip it if you want, but, I want to do some things for me.

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SEERS are fascinating people by virtue of how much they resemble the trope of movie characters designed entirely to dump exposition: content to observe the stories of others, present in every conversation with a perspective from the outside, and verbose despite very little ego. Every Seer is ready to give advice to others on how to solve their problems and live virtuously - if they don't, or it's not appreciated, they are very stable in debates-bordering-on-arguments to get there. Despite the importance of these beliefs, Seers often compensate by remaining playful, making them more approachable and keeping them in the loop if they're still processing their thoughts (and because screwing with people is funny). This behavior blurs into their principles, where they often bluff certainty as sparing moments of authority that are otherwise irrelevant to their friendships and group dynamics...though, depending on the individual, they may advertise themselves as a hyper-specific-expert-on-one-subject without the foreplay, which transparently shows the limitations of their beliefs and experiences. They have a penchant for hanging around erratic or unstable people, keeping them on the right path as readily as they tell everyone else how to co-exist with them. Their personal eccentricities often mask the fact that they rarely personally execute the plans they keep drafting - and sometimes, they should.

Both Prophets are equally inclined towards simple appreciation and quiet surrender to one's aspect, but Seers are interested in everyone

else's place in the universe. By suggesting both optimization and restrictions, they subtly encourage Mage-like traits and worldviews: to **understand** their aspect as it pertains to everyone, rationalizing it as an undercurrent to all behaviors, neutral and inescapable. The comfortability of their (somewhat rambling) lectures speaks to this, and they know how to frame good news or bad news on their "unbiased" terms. If you've had a long day, if you've screwed up, if life won't let up, Seers can supply the quiet resolve of Mages to the people who really need it - and in turn, they see beauty in other people's lives, how they intersect and weave to make more than the sum of their parts. However, this also means that it's not very concrete or structured, and Seers struggle when pressed for clarity or consistency. While the outline is consistent, they play fast and loose with the details in order to stay relevant, highlighting the importance of levity so that curveballs do not invalidate them. To this end, their aspect is evolving vageries; predictions phrased as fate, warnings phrased as advice, desires phrased as universal, admiration phrased as fact, resignations phrased as impossibilities, as the tide you shouldn't bother fighting - at least, not without their help, and certainly not while they're not looking.

Couldn't tell you what the conditions are. "Clear assessments that no one's going to listen to anyways I guess" seems like the root, but...well, that's a decision a child makes, and can come from a variety of different circumstances. The only consistency I can find is that they didn't feel heard, but I suppose when that's your primary concern...

The catch with every passive class is that the expectations they push to others often do not include themselves. While Seers try to stay on the backlines, they can still be trouble when they're too certain they know where everyone should be; yes, they don't get involved, and never force anyone to do anything, but they do know how to push buttons (again, probably a little too well, especially towards people they actually care about). Often, a "prettier" picture is preferred over practical concerns, and many will shirk away from preventative measures or course-correction. When Seers drift from "and our beautiful world keeps spinning" into more "don't rock the boat" lectures, it's understandable to question their motive. Sometimes they might get selfish for something besides peace of mind, sure, but that's not the real hazard; Seers have a habit of falling off the wagon silently and without telling anyone, getting swallowed up by vices or a bad crowd. They're *very* good at changing the subject or downplaying this, so it's probably best to check in on them every once and awhile; ironically, you'll probably get a clearer picture asking a mutual friend, and not the Seer themselves.

Both of Homestuck's Seers display this (the important ones; Kankri is 50% meme), coincidentally at the same time. I suppose Terezi had *signs*, sure, but even pointing at PhemieC's incredible work, it's more Karkat's song that addresses her "noose of excuses"

rather than Terezi's herself. It's actually kinda fitting it would be from someone on the outside...and a little bittersweet, thinking of some old friends.

Prospit Seers are unashamed of how they want everyone to act and what their read of the situation is. This earnestness ensures they have a rather static place in friend groups - anyone who wants to listen to them is already listening, and anyone else knows what to expect. This makes them a bit "one-note", but this is from intentionally embracing their role, not from actual simplicity. You learn more about them from their hobbies, not their conversations, even if they're explicitly trying to keep your attention somewhere else. They seem to put *too* much of their faith in their beliefs, and can be unprepared for a lack of clear and clean solutions; the world is either simple, or it ought to be. While misfortune is rationalized and downplayed to cope, they're more prone to believe their excuses that it doesn't - or shouldn't - bother them. They probably (hopefully) don't think they literally know everything, but they *do* think that the world can be cohesively understood with enough patience and enough steps back...but while they're trying to clarify a greater whole that will never stop being blurry, they don't notice the growing distance to their friends, or how close they're getting to falling off a cliff.

Terezi is weird. Kankri is too, and while I know a few media characters who align with their characteristics, I don't actually know any in person. I may not be the best person to define them. I keep going over this, and there SHOULD be more to say, but...ugh. I'll re-read Homestuck, and try to actually make friends with someone like that. I have guesses. For now, if you suspect that you or someone you know is a prospit seer, just focus on ironing on what you're NOT by using the document.

Derse Seers are unashamed of how they want everyone to act, but weave double-talk and sarcasm around it to the point that you might forget and let your guard down. Their observations are more consciously malleable, and they're more accepting of depressing outcomes and dysfunction as "just the way things are". At the same time, they're the most likely to meddle and give people a few shoves in certain directions; aiming for certain results while not giving the game away, and not above some aggressive and personal jabs if they think they have to. Beyond business, most can be very chummy, and know how to have a casual chat and level things out; ready to jump into action, but shoot the shit all the same until then. Still, nothing quite throws them off-balance like flipping the spotlight. They can deflect most days, pivot the conversation away, generally knowing the ways they're a wreck already while laughing about it...but with enough pressure and dabblings of self-sabotage, it stops being funny.

Tricky people; even with Rose as a constant character for nearly the whole comic, it's hard to see the generalized traits separated from her own singular identity. I keep thinking of Diane from Bojack, as a media example, and even Evelyn Parker from Cyberpunk is remarkably well written for her brief appearances. More importantly, I knew a friend from a punk house I used to live in; Hopebound and proud, and helped keep things going. Impatient with others sometime, sure, but she always knew how to bounce back and persuade

others in directions - or, guilt them, sometimes. I still love her. I hope she's okay. Funnily enough I thought she was a Witch originally...I'll, get to that.

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Unarmed by choice, a voice heard often as readily as unheeded, unneeded. To a village or nation, public or private, you are privy to the prophecies of all who meet your distant eyes; enchanted and enlightened, humbled and in service. You see how they live, struggle, die, all in the greater scope - twists of fate, connected and echoing, evolving and conspiring. You help them brace for it, when they ask you to break it; soothe the nerves of the dually destined and doomed, longing for hope and help that won't or will. If there is a calling, a request, then it's no mortal toil; if the Seer steers, it's only to guide the errant and erratic. Impartial, unbiased, blameless, overconfident - if anyone *truly will* defy destiny, only you know the fleeting opportunities, unnoticed and unmissed. Taste that hunger and ignore the other - starving, smiling, bestowing cosmic truth while lying to yourself. You see the world past the material - why so sure there's only one, and why so quick to trust it? What are rules from practicality, and which only tradition?

For every answer, ask two questions; you're a player, not a pawn.

Aut viam invenium aut facium.

MAGICIANS

(TINKERERS, TRICKSTERS, TROUBLEMAKERS)

Adapting an aspect isn't so drastic as to warp and misshape it carelessly - at the first tier of it, there's more you can accept than take issue with. Without meaning to do much, the rest is brought with it; simple and subtle, a spark of magic **changes** everything. Of course, magic is under scrutiny, and these two know that best; it's easy for them to assume they are frauds and charlatans, manipulating people under the pretext of care. To the weilder, it is most obvious what trickery and misdirection is employed...but to an observer, it is more obvious what *cannot* be explained. Even if the practitioner does not believe their presentation, the goodwill manifested proves a point: magic is fucking real.

WITCHES are guileful innovators, finding a path forward from the sidelines or in the wake of others. Playful and imaginative, they enjoy the little things in life and try to avoid drama or stress; however, they maintain a firm grip at the reigns of their own life, and don't budge easy to the whims of others. They know how to keep busy with

projects, with a creative spark that tends to bluff past obstacles more than overcome. Witches rarely take orders, are envious of very few, accomplish things with the absolute minimum amount of assistance required, and are more opinionated than they often find is socially appropriate. If they want to, they will. If they can't, they won't. If it bothers people, they'll try to avoid doing it or try to avoid those particular people. If people want an apology, it's often more formality than genuine. They have their own way of doing things, and will do their best to be a good person and a good friend - but if it's too much work, they'll find an alternative, somehow, somehow.

Witches fundamentally know what they want (however modest), and their only conflict is achieving that against a world that didn't get the memo: they **change their aspect**, only ever adjusting what personally bothers them in the moment and finding their groove without *deliberately* trying to shove others to the side. This is probably the most stable iteration of one's aspect possible, requiring no upkeep and having no boundaries, dead simple and (mostly) impossible to screw up. However, more than just *easy* to maintain, it's also preferable - maybe even necessary. Witches often seem to be trying to keep ahead of some nasty thoughts and topics; a despair they don't demonstrate, that they'll do a lot to keep quiet. Their aspect is a response, easy to recognize but hard to define; it's in a Witch's hobbies, their quick thinking, their excuses, their dream job, their heartbeat, their sore spots, their sparks of devotion, and what they might screw with because they're bored. All flavour, sprinkles, condiments, with no exact structure.

Small solutions yes, but they stem from small problems. There ain't a Witch alive who didn't have at least a *few* discontented thoughts with the way things were growing up. They fixed it - or at least stopped the bleeding. Prospects seem more likely to have simply resolved *boredom*, but not always...and Dersites, more as a rule.

Witches aren't really interested in "suffering for their convictions" or "sacrificing for a brighter tomorrow". Like, again, they *like* people, but they'd much rather wriggle out of problems rather than face them head on. They're also not really very fact-based people - if they don't like you, they don't like you. Leave a bad first impression and they're not big on second chances; overbearing personalities tend to cause them to scatter. Witches are incredible problem-solvers, but trying to avoid people won't always mean they won't make enemies. Most days, that means never being too involved, and never intentionally pissing people off, but Witches can be just a little bit disproportionate to slights. There's not much pushing them forward, but there's less holding them back; if they're in a mood (either for an hour, or a year), then they're unnervingly unmotivated to feel guilty to the messes they leave behind. Again, they are *generally* helpful people, but so long as

it isn't a matter of life and death, they'll probably promise to help you recover rather than help you push through something...and they might be a bit late to show up, too.

Always the same catch-22: if you like them, you've obviously fallen for their facade, when they are innately bad people. If you don't like them, you only caught a glance of the REAL Witch behind the facade. It's an odd way to control their place in the world, and it's very difficult to disarm. They're not used to people liking them for who they are, and they're prone to drawing blood if they think they need to prove why. Ultimately, wanting people to steer clear of them for their own good, it distracts from the fact they *want* good things for the people around them; our perception of the world and our perception of ourselves both reflect the individual. Witches are cruder than they pretend to be, kinder than they can understand, and they shouldn't be so caught off guard that people close to them could forgive them for that - some may already know.

If you've ever heard someone say "You shouldn't fall in love with me", they're probably either a Witch, or heard a Witch say that at some point and thought it would be cool to say to someone else.

Prospit Witches are much more Sabrina than crop-killing monster. They're positive, polite, and very idealistic; reality often meets them harshly, and not if they can help it. While their ideals are preferably undefined, their track record often speaks for itself - creativity, carefree, casually opinionated, contextually careless. Their personality is mirthful often despite their circumstances; maybe it feels like they decided a long time ago they didn't want to grow up, but it's a conscious decision made by a sober mind, and not held past the point of reason. They'll...*try* to stick it out for friends who ask too much or rub them the wrong way, but they also might ghost and hope no one notices. If this all sounds like sunshine, that's because it kind of is; at the same time, irritation will eventually spill into temper, as stark a contrast as it is brief. Moral disagreements are sparse, and there isn't much incentive to press issues anyways - they're amicable people to the point of being enviable, or even maddening. If they've got demons, they've either got it handled (**alone**), or they think they can live with it - and I'll be real, they probably can, and that's terrifying.

Jade Harley is weird. Good, but weird. Chixie from Friendsim, despite only having her aspect off a notch, helps provide a more "grounded" example of a Prospit Witch. I've got a Witch of Light who's one of my best friends. Calm, tries not to be trusted for conflicts or big thoughts, but I always have trouble believing that - she's clever! And such fucking **passion** when she gets riled up! Always the smallest things! Story beats and unresolved checkovs! I know she says it isn't much, but, I feel like I've got the words to describe why I've always admired her, you know?

Derse Witches are content to be twisted and misunderstood, with a darker sense of humor and a touch of sadism. They're generally very cheery, but not "optimistic" strictly speaking; they're rather matter-of-fact towards both the world's evils and their own, finding delights within the macabre, rather than in spite of it. They're far more aware of the ramifications of their actions, but never push things so far that they'd have to apologize. They can be *quite* cruel if you cross them (or if you haven't), and they've likely got lots of friends they simply

stopped talking to one day (if not outright burned a bridge), leaving it to personal preference if you think it's worth to stay in their radius. Rebellious and deviously creative, they are proudly outspoken in beliefs they're happy to prove possible. They're not in any hurry to prove themselves to anyone besides themselves however, and have little restraint in voicing their honest - and sometimes hurtful - thoughts. They might look harmless or cute at a distance, but they're consciously aware of that facade, reveling both in the misdirection itself and what it'll let them get away with.

I have a friend who's a Derse Witch of Space (she's the one who made the globe). It is charming how much she resembles Jade Harley, straight down to speaking style and certain habits. It's more unnerving hearing her glee at messing with people's emotions and watching things unravel, or her equal glee reminiscing on a past of abusive and toxic lovers. I wouldn't trade her for the world.

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HEIRS are kind, compassionate, and defined by well-intentioned judgements; even if people don't agree, Heirs always find a way to get a word in without losing the room. They naturally slide into social groups, and quickly establish an environment where people look to them for support. They know how to communicate their thoughts effectively and without making things too personal, forcing people to reconcile themselves on their own terms rather than get caught up in a battle of egos. They don't like friends fighting, mediating disagreements in a variety of ways but always prone to a "I think what Steve is *trying* to say is..." hijacking. Altruistic, determined, and cherished, Heirs are, more often than not, all these things - but the one lie is "carefree". Underneath the "perfect friend" is someone who thinks everything is going to go to shit if they don't administrate, and that tends to be true regardless of whether they realize it, let alone *want* to.

Equius overthinks it, John underthinks it, Mituna doublethinks it - between the three of them, I get it if Heirs seem a little hard to define. I'm privileged to know quite a few, and they're thankfully pretty open to invasive questions - if suddenly hesitant the moment I try to draw conclusions. Not "defensive" just...it's overprotective is all, you know?

Heirs are diligent, despite often coming off as docile. Their programming is simple enough: "make things better for people", with their aspect as a series of nebulous and malleable guidelines. This doesn't mean they're lazy, far from it; Heirs are a living

counterbalance, becoming increasingly motivated, protective, and maybe a *little* controlling when they feel the situation requires it. This call to action is subtle enough that it can be the only reason they speak up and get creative at all, making their autonomy as individuals completely intertwined with their sense of purpose - they **change** their environment with their aspect, but also **change** themselves into what they think the world needs them to be. Despite all of this, they frequently don't know what's so special about themselves specifically, when it's more obvious from the outside how their track record creates an outline of what they bring to the table. Their aspect (and, again, *them*) is their curious questions, their double-checking, their helpful reminders, their 11th hour miracles, the rare heated argument, what they've got under control, the possibilities that can't be ruled out yet, and the eternal well-spring of solutions that truly does feel like an inherited birthright sometimes.

"Chosen One" indeed, but not because they actually *are* destined - the dragon existed before the prophecy. More bluntly, an Heir's childhood environment locks in their habits, as they grew up having to be the parent that no one else was being, but *someone* clearly had to be. Even with Homestuck's own, it's easy to see how John and Equius politely argue with the traditions threatening to swallow them. It also explains resentments Heirs often have towards that responsibility, as it was always an emergency situation - something that shouldn't happen twice in a just world. Pity it sticks. Pity they're so good solving everyone else's problems, that people actually *will* ask them to keep doing it despite the damage. And they can. We are so often at the mercy of our delusions.

There is a downside to the rush of endorphins that come with rising to the challenge and saving the day - eventually, you win, and you're no longer needed. To an Heir's credit, they generally (hopefully) don't directly incite trouble just to play savior, but that makes it a bit more subtle; it means letting people know "I'm always here to listen", and never turning *down* codependency; it means never saying a crisis is 100% resolved, leaving the door open for relapse; it means casting vague doubts if something's done without the Heir's magic touch, implying only one final seal of approval; it means planting themselves in center of very toxic dynamics, being everyone's shoulder to cry on. Heirs have an alarming addiction to "loops" like these, where they're placating a crisis rather than closing it. It's hard for anyone (even them) to notice, since they're reflexive in framing arguments in other people's "best interests" - and who's to say comfort isn't a substitute for solutions anyways? The cracks are slow, but they add up from one of three reasons: a problem they can't solve, solving all problems and getting "twitchy", or pure stressed-out exasperation. Whichever one it is (or maybe all three), Heirs are finally confronted with their *own* baggage...and that isn't something they're prepared for, or want any help with. Who they were feels "fake", leaving them to drift off and seclude. They might be back in a month. Or a decade. Or never.

John suddenly becoming depressed and Equius suddenly becoming useless weren't really surprises - it was an inevitability ticking down from the moment they existed. It's just

as inevitable in real life. It's very difficult getting them to brace for it - hopefully, through this document or whatever else, not impossible.

Prospit Heirs might be frustrating sometimes, but they're kinda impossible to stay mad at. Preferring to live life on autopilot, they perform all an Heir's duties of questioning everything without questioning their habits, and keep the mood light in all moments inbetween. They don't overthink their advice, don't get caught up on grand consequences, and also don't often think they can be wrong - at worst, what's a few harmless questions and words of warning? They're good listeners, but a little sour if they aren't making any headway with people, which makes them more likely to quit if they get too frustrated. They prefer free-wheeling through dangerous situations, ignoring what might be difficult to comprehend and only focusing on resolving what *does* make sense. You can count on them to always be pitching in even when there isn't a gameplan...but when their patience finally wears thin, their tempers surprise even them; too much feels unfamiliar and alien, unworkable, all at once. There's alot bottled up, and they're not measuring the breaking points.

I'm sure one could laugh and put Spongebob or something here. You wouldn't be wrong, there's plenty of happy dorks trying to cheer up sadsacks that play well in media...you just have to realize why real people exhibit these habits. A well developed one would be Todd Chavez (I wanna say Timebound?), whose drive and temper are naturally wrought out of him in ways that feel awfully familiar.

Homestuck's own John Egbert can be difficult to read past "comedic dork", and his gradual depression and lack of energy going forward in the story can feel out of left field. It isn't. My own brother is a Prospit Heir of Breath, and, while grumpier, he's done all the same things for all the same reasons, straight down to drifting away from people (and, on a more comedic note, preferring hammers in Monster Hunter, and installing trainers and debug modes for every game we play). Guy puts himself in too many bad situations; I feel guilty thinking I was one of them, growing up. He forgives me. I worry he'd do that regardless of how sorry I was.

Derse Heirs are therapists who need therapists. Careful on what would tip things too far or be too bold to say, Derse Heirs hold their tongues, believing recklessness breeds catastrophe. They're good at what they do, but are the most prone to throw themselves too far into impossible goals with a martyr's masochism - content only in chaos and toil, proving themselves through bleeding hands and broken spirit. Too often, they fear their friendly face is a fraudulent facade, only a mask to their violent impulses and desire to control others, only held back through self-control. They're calm because they believe the world needs them to be calm; beating the shit out of someone (who probably has it coming) violates their presentation, despite being a part of their most honest self. Their ability to be "perfect" is built on volatile elements - wait too many years, and they'll dissapear one day, feeling like they can never be that person again, no matter how much good it would do. Getting them to open up with all their pain, philosophy and politics is something you either do in a safe enviroment, or something they do alone - and with more mess.

Equius is...interestin'. Weird society, weird kid, and he knows that. Also, a kid - Derse Heirs seem to round out more as they go along. Would've been nice to see more of that. Poor guy. Top 5 characters, I swear.

I've got a very close friend who always had Heir traits; I never really understood how much goes through their heads until he gave me a shot with all this, and we dug deep into Equius's psychology ("Inherit Nothing" is such a good song). It's helped me see all this more clearly, and I hope you will too. Failing that, watch Steven Universe Future.

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A world in chaos, mired in misfortune, draped in darkness---

SERVANTS

(WARRIORS, PAWNS, SLAVES)

Seeing an aspect for what it is is one thing, but it's not going to be enough for everybody. Following the rules for the sake of itself can seem a waste - where's the tangible benefit? How hard do you have to work before the system pays off? Isn't this aspect supposed to be "good", not just "comfortable"? The Servants trade intuition for initiative, trying to **exploit** the immutable as far as it goes without colouring outside the lines...however, this struggle with the application often takes the definition for granted. Without a Prophet's eye, Servants often leave others to define their aspect for them, or fail to question their assumptions; yet, their rigid beliefs grounds them when all goes wrong, not giving up until there truly is no other choice. Faith in a Kingdom is what makes them build it, and they'll damn well fight for it too.

PAGES are wistful dreamers, quick to apologize and quick to offer help to anyone around them. They're plagued by both crippling doubt and wild ambition, commonly exhibiting a stop-and-start confidence: charismatic promises, followed by imploding into a mess of apologies and self-flagellation. They're attracted to romanticized stories of heroes and saviors, either emulating them (tentatively) or becoming attached to exciting people in their lives; despite this, they're often ashamed and self conscious of their interests, while being incapable of shutting up about it. Many remain punching bags who only function through escapism and living by proxy, but they can never truly ignore their desires; stubbornly opinionated behind their bashful exterior, Pages are on a long journey to untangle themselves and find the confidence to say everything they ever felt needed saying. This often means continually experimenting with their presentation, trying to find the right approach, ruleset, and knowledge to align their principles with a world they're tentative to confront. They may eventually find their confidence, embodying an impossible larger-than-

life persona full time...or spend the rest of their lives in the shadow of who they wish to be.

Important disclosure: I am a Page.

Mages and Pages are related to each other like T-Rexes and chickens: understandable, once you get past the insult. Both are weighed down by personal dogma, a lifestyle that must conform to conviction and respect limitation. Yet, where Mages take simple pleasures in a life of neutrality, a Page has a taste for adventure in a world with something to lose...and they're *going* to lose (at least from the onset). The bar for success is steep, and the punishments are severe for both failure and shortcuts. Alongside this, a brighter spark still hasn't blotted out outside world; in fact, it only highlights how selfish, obtrusive, and fake these self-imposed delusions are. Thus, to the mirror and masses, good must be both performed and proven: Pages **exploit** their aspect, earning merit under a metric they infer but never infringe. While they do their best to be helpful, they're often tongue tied through holding friends and their problems by a personal ruleset - Pages do not serve people, they serve their gut. They automatically filter daydreams into obsessions, opinions into judgements, and childhood fantasies into standards of success. It should be no surprise then that Pages express such constant fragility on a day to day basis, overwhelmed by their own impossible, unfulfilled labours. They're always failures by their metric alone; assuming fault for things out of their control, alternating between trying to rise to that challenge and trying to escape. Still, Pages will always try to spread their ideas, never giving up on the potential - and so long as they do, even if they won't admit it, they haven't given up on themselves. Their aspect takes the form of imagined utopias, reassuring mantras, sanctified laws, sticking points, zeitgeist assessment, weird outbursts, and indulgences ranging from harmless escapism to superhero bravado.

I know my story. I know the Pages in Homestuck lean the same way. I'd probably get more out of real Pages if I could talk to them - too much resentment. I hate seeing who I was, and who I am when I'm thrown off-balance. Mages accept their aspect because they see it as their lot in life - at one point, it was, and now they just don't reach far enough. Pages...it should be no surprise Pages distance themselves from their own brain, blame themselves for wanting more. Someone pushed something on them - could be parents, or just something from society that kept their attention as a kid - and they rushed ahead to meet that standard before realizing how absolutely unqualified they were. Failure, handicaps, or simple inadequacy are not coincidences to the Pages; they appear to be a quintessential ingredient, *especially* as they pertain to their chosen aspect. You can't save the world when you're already living in an apocalypse. You can't be a free spirit when you're helplessly dependent on others. Can't slink off into nothing when you're a public aristocrat. Can't meet the world head on when you're too autistic to even belong in it.

And you can't stop thinking about it. Can't stop identifying with it. It's you. You're a failure in trying to be you. Why? What about the doubt, isn't that you too? Not in the way you want, where all your instincts keep clawing and screaming at you. So fuck you for wanting it; you must be greedy, you must be not good enough, someone else should be here in your place. Your name is wrong, your flesh is wrong, your fucking soul is wrong. You don't deserve to be yourself.

Next person who says Pages are a passive class gets a fucking boot up the ass.

No matter the potential, there's no guarantee a Page will make it, or be not-insufferable in the process. While latching on to valour and heroism is all well and good, they're still inherently self-centered. Reality can become distorted to the point that Pages blot out or downplay competing narratives, and while they'll flagellate themselves for failures (even ones other people attribute to them), they have a huge blind spot when *they* are the aggressor; what they failed *and* what they wanted are both sanctified in their mind first and foremost. Selfishness and slights get wrapped up with moralizing, where Pages can see themselves as the tragic victim who deserves accolades, or accommodation, or someone else's girl (or whoever). Resenting this part of their brains is not the same as killing it, and it's often in the midst of self-loathing Pages will cave to impulse; a lifetime of agony trying to win an impossible race, they think stealing the prize might numb the pain. On the other hand, a Page finding their confidence is no guarantee of altruism: helping (or even *agreeing*) with other people is optional, and Pages are prone to dig in their heels even if they're not sure how to justify it yet - and sometimes, they shouldn't. Fact is, Pages like getting what they want, and making that sound like a good thing for everyone. Whether it's guilt tripping pity-parties, or overzealous calls to action, "inspiration" and "manipulation" become increasingly muddy distinctions.

I have problems. Most days, I have them under control, even if they never truly go away. I've had alot of people gaslight me over the years, and I know that makes me predisposed to mimic it on top of natural Page...schemey, worm bullshit. I don't always know when it happens, but I'm better when I do, and better when I act in a way I won't have to make excuses for it. You want a good media example of a Page going off the rails with hubris, look at Sam Raimi's Spider-man 3. You want an example where the Page *stays* an asshole, go watch Gotham; I'm not specifying who without a lawyer.

That Witch of Space pal of mine brought up how often sexual conquests or obsessions make up Page thought. She's on to something, but I wouldn't call it a rule - there's an asexual Page out there somewhere, I'm sure. It *is*, however, a good example of how reliably the Page brain hypes itself up into only doing what it wanted to do in the first place.

Prosperit Pages are probably the first thing that popped into your head when I was describing all this. Innocent, well-meaning, polite, with only pristine visions of a world where nothing bad ever happens and everything works out for everyone. Still marred by poor self-esteem, they're more *confused* anyone sees potential in them rather than anything else - which can make them slow to accept change, waiting on a miracle rather than being practical. They try to live in accordance with law and order, but also miss when that blurs with their own principles; they're very difficult to reason with if they've been properly riled up, as rare as that is to happen. More often than not, they're simply polite and lost in their own little world, wildly

enthusiastic about their hobbies and interests to the point of overwhelming people who listen. While they frequently apologize for rambling (or during it, if they can't stop themselves), these are all the hallmarks of a Page still holding themselves back. Could wind up something beautiful, but they'll only stop being so annoying after they stop mentioning it.

Homestuck's got plenty of Pages, and they're primarily Prospits; Tavros and Jake, sure (count Tavros for the only one who hit his potential permanently, and all by himself), but there's also a more buttermilk-sour example in Zebede from Friendsim. I gotta mention My Hero Academia with Deku, though anime is honestly full of them anywhere you look.

Just as whimpering but with the added attribute of *"wicked"*, **Derse Pages** are pressure cookers ready to either make a diamond or crack one. They're guarded, stressed, wracked with self-loathing, and eternally aware of the bleak future of broken dreams that they seem cursed to follow; as such, they remain in a constant state of course correction. Personally, they range from "cheery" with every joke a cry for help, or so brokenly despondent they have no other characteristics. Their self-awareness is often why they're so overwhelmed; resentful to their own compulsions and their lot in life, still seeing both as their fault somehow. They are more prone overall to manipulation or treachery, due to the fact that these are not breaks from their code entirely, but rather parts (not all) of the code itself - they tend to root for the bad guys, be it in media or news reports. Very aware of their dark thoughts, most Derse Pages try to stuff it down and "sanitize" themselves, which only makes for worse crimes when something snaps; if they don't make it heroic, it'll only ever be hedonistic. They can't ignore they have some strong opinions on morality, and that if the universe made any *goddamn sense* it would punish the guilty...but they're their first example of "guilty". They've gone too far before, and they will again, but what matters is not making the same mistakes twice. They truly do want to make the world beautiful, but they're willing to step over *alot* of people to get there - at least, far more than they're comfortable admitting.

Don't look at me like that.

Horuss - for as brief his appearances - hit close to home. Same for Xefros of Hiveswap fame (who's abusive best friend was...uncanny). Look, you ever see a moody little sadsack like Shinji from Evangelion and wanna shake him because you know he's underselling himself...shake him, but don't keep doing it when you realize we're just toughing this out as one more punishment we deserve for the crime of existing. Too many people feel they can "fix" Pages when it boils down to pressure and insults; Derse Pages especially are incredibly pent up in everything they **want** to say, but there's a reason they think they can't. You have to challenge them, but you have to trust them at the same time. We're tricky people, and probably as selfish as we keep loudly worrying we are.

Actually, you know who's a fantastic example? Chidi, of the Good Place; sure, he's got the whole journey down, but Kant's phillosophy feels the important takeaway. "Acting in accordance with what you want to be a universal law" and all that. It's not suggesting that never lying will stop lying, only that it can be personally fulfilling - and isn't believing in "universal laws of virtue" what Pages are all about?

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---Modest, honest, meager, eager---

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KNIGHTS are loyal, consistent, tough, and so compulsively humble they'll refuse to admit any of it. They naturally drift into becoming the fulcrum for friend groups (with slight favourites), handling tasks most would find monotonous or stifling. They share a Page's flair for self-deprecating theatrics, but often meant more to playfully (or aggressively) annoy rather than endear. Whether it's casual socializing or dire situations, Knights specialize in bravado and persona - they do not show weakness, and do not bring down the mood with their own problems. While they frequently double down on their walls and defenses when pressed for honesty, they do have speeches ready for those moments; that this is their burden to bear, all they're allowed to be, so someone else can shine brighter...but, these are the lies of someone who isn't the main character of their own life. Cracks always appear eventually, as the Knight lifestyle is inherently unsustainable both from stress and idealized "standard" that never was. Selfless sacrifice is a great idea on paper, but respecting them for the struggle only distracts from the fact that they don't have to. Rules and restriction drive them forward, but limits their potential; they fight a battle they do not expect to win, but they absolutely *can* as soon as they can be convinced they deserve to.

I swear Latula is the most functioning Knight, and most of that is just being REALLY GOOD at pretending everything's fine. Look, if this entry sounds harsh, it's that I don't want to romanticize hurting yourself so everyone else is okay - even if Knights do good, it should never be at the cost of their soul. They all think it has to.

"An idealized image of everyone else while personally failing to self-care" is a carry-over from Seers, but the higher stakes only highlight the issues; their lack of compromise, their insistence they know best for everyone, and prioritizing "pretty" pictures over actual improvement. Course, rather than just observe, they feel an obligation to get involved and apply elbow grease, while still seeing everything around them in terms of poetry. The same way that a Page's brain hypes their own casual desires into virtuous tasks, a Knight's brain tries to enshrine everyone else's desires as the Knight's duty to fulfill; just as soul-crushing, but they're not about to let anyone see them cry. This results in huge miscommunications and resentment because **Knights are not psychic, and frequently not emotionally honest enough to learn (LET ALONE GUESS) what their friends want,**

or how they want it done, if at all. A Knight speaks and demonstrates their aspect fine, but refuses to practice it in a way that benefits or glorifies them in particular; with an ascetic focus on function, Knights **exploit** their aspect as a weapon - a hammer, in a world of too few nails. It's their take-it-or-leave-it problem solver, their code of honor, *your* utopia they build from their own blood, the ark to save you, the rules at their expense, the god they appease, the chain holding them down...and, often, it's the qualities they project onto other people, who somehow "deserve" it more.

Always similar parents. Have whatever happy conversation you want, they clam up when their folks are around - speak when spoken to, no acting out of line. Classpects are trained into us; no matter how bizarre or disconnected from reality a Knight's compulsions seem, they were law at some point in their lives before. It helped them survive. Once.

Knights can and will do a lot of good, but they have to teach themselves how to do it without hurting themselves. It's hard for them to express affection as anything less than falling on their sword, and they'll have a hundred explanations for why the universe *somehow* requires them to suffer in order to function. Mind you, they're not always the victim; Knights can bring their pain with them, and struggle to force their surroundings into the battlefield they want to die in. It means seeing mundane friends as perfect hero leaders to follow with unquestioning devotion, helpless damsels to protect, and tyrants who oppress them. They'll get mad because suggestions or casual requests are *felt* as do-or-die commands, and the Knight wants validation for their toil - and in the worst cases, *payment*. Just as likely the Knight won't say anything, continuing to willingly volunteer at chores and busywork because it's their "secret burden". If the emotional toll wears them down, if people disappoint (or just confuse) them, if their framework *shatters*, most throw in the towel. They can sulk and say they failed, try to start over with more damage, or they can become hatefully bitter at the entire concept of goodwill - life is nothing but broken promises to them now. Knights will put you on a pedestal, and it's alarming how much temper and desperation they'll display if you try to leave...and how much they want *you* to be mad if *they* threaten to leave.

If we're being entirely honest, Dave Strider's mental breakdown could've been a lot worse.

Prosperit Knights are not, strictly speaking, "laid-back". They may pretend to be, or openly mention they'd prefer to, but their rules still have them in a vice. As inflexible as they are, they're the least likely to crack; they're content with their chosen level of stress, and their bluster or self-deprecation never completely overtakes their ability to have a rational discussion. This does mean they're the least likely to consciously recognize they have problems, but they are the most

likely to admit it - but again, not really looking for “solutions”. Letting someone else take the lead is very natural for them (to the point they may not want to admit it), but they’re not above backtalk and not immune to open disrespect, making them prone to a “backseat driver” kind of criticism. If they do snap, it’s not as sudden; you can often see the gears turning as they talk, liable to mention when they’re running out of patience for people (just not if you ask directly, then it’s “fine” again, because that’s the “correct” response). Letting all the rudeness out and deciding if they’re going to burn a few bridges (or all of them) is bound to happen eventually. It might be a half measure where they’re still unconsciously empathetic and respectful despite their words...and it might *not* be.

Karkat’s tricky - even Hussie admitted his lifestyle in a hostile and totalitarian world really warped his perceptions, making his personality a bit of a deviation. Still, one has to admit that he is clear about how he feels about any given situation - no one said “fucking pissed” isn’t a valid interpretation of Prospit honesty. Latula feels a more general example, and looking to media winds up with a lot of *literal* sidekicks.

Derse Knights do not trust easily, but they don’t need to in order to get shit done. Knighthood for them is conditional, inherently a task of sacrifice, and hidden behind an impenetrable wall of antagonistic jokes, deflections, and relentless “class clown” harassment; they’re hesitant to admitting their mushy emotions, and may become evasive, violent, or even overbearing if it’s drawn out of them. They resent being told what to do, despite still finding solace in a job well done; they’re more aware of what they’d do with independence, but often villify it. These harsh constraints and contradictions have no pleasant destinations without outside perspectives, and it’s unlikely for them to sustain relationships with people where they can perform their labour, avoid emotional honesty, and still function. They may not know if they want affection, respect, both, or neither; being actively unpleasant rarely helps, and can only be played for a joke so often. Their added self-loathing makes them more likely to prefer, endure, and *cultivate* abuse in their direction - their world might not make sense otherwise.. They’re a minion, an underling, a grunt, and they often respond to compliments as existential threats; if things get too “chummy”, they’re very likely to self-sabotage in dramatic ways, surgically trying to piss as many people off as possible, saying things that can’t be taken back and breaking things that can’t be repaired. There’s pride in there, sure, but they’re not hurting people because they’re “no good”: they’re hurting people because they’re terrified to be loved, and because their moral framework has no way to process them getting a hug. Solutions will not be apparent if they’re too swallowed up in their toil, and if they don’t reach out to *someone*, they’ll go down some dark roads.

You can point to this. Can point to Rocket Raccoon. Can point to Dave Strider. Fact is, I've had two Derse Knights in my life, and after years of friendship, I still lost them both. I don't know if there was anything I could do to change it. I'm no good with no-win situations, and it's all they seem to prefer.

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[blugh]

OUTLAWS

(REBELS, DOCTORS, CHEATS)

It takes a magic touch to bend the rules without leaving any mark, but desperation is it's own mistress. Twist a few rules, ignore the rest, but only enough for you and yours; to **steal** admits trespass, but who's to say the system doesn't have it coming? That principle can wait when people starve? That reform (perhaps not revolution, not yet) may need a touch of violence? "Greed" isn't really the driving force - it's "Envy". The world is simply full of too many nice things being doled out to those that don't appreciate it, and too many injustices dealt to those that deserved better. Of course that's subjective, but it always will be - for these two, that might be enough.

THIEVES know exactly who they are and who they want to be...or at least, the impression of both of those things, which may not hold up to either scrutiny or setbacks. Sly and snarky, they're difficult to ignore by design; always fighting the tide, and defining themselves by their deviations, their unique (or simply unappreciated) talents, and general disagreements. While bold as individuals, they are not truly independent: counterculture requires culture, and rebels require a status quo. Thieves are highly aware of their environment, expectations, and social dynamics, and may only find their voice when they find their audience. Crude and rude boasts of superiority are a cliché; however, while the schadenfreude of offending has it's delights, Thieves are always looking to *impress* far more (even if they haven't realized it yet). No matter how much they stress to be an outsider, they keep "coincidentally" crossing paths, inviting friends to nights of troublemaking and debauchery, or swearing some pretty serious pacts of blood-bonds. They're the team's fixer, the dark horse, the secret weapon...and yes, they really just want you to pay attention to them and never leave, even if they struggle to do it in a way that isn't at least a little rude. Honestly, they're just cats.

To their credit, Thieves are really positive people, with a fearless (if contextual) confidence they're almost justified in advertising. They upset the delicate balance of Witches by identifying as someone who

upsets delicate balances; just as much the free spirit with none of the discretion, a Thief **steals** their aspect in broad daylight. They're shrewd in justifying loopholes, exceptions, special treatment, and often attaching their signature (and self-worth) to the socially risqué...or, straight up something they don't deserve, belongs to someone else, and they've misunderstood the subtleties of. Losing a Witch's modesty also highlights the mechanism: keep your hands busy, keep your eyes on the prize, do not slow down. Witches always bounce back, but Thieves are playing with higher stakes: lows that bleed the spirit, and highs they'll fight to preserve. A Thief's aspect is not their pride, but what holds it together; their art that the world isn't ready for, their secret technique (weirdly proud of cheating), their illicit romances, their spirit animal, their gold medal in a competition that's killing them (still weirdly proud of cheating), their insistent catchphrases, the niche they won't share, what they won't apologize for, and the molotov that keeps them warm in a cold, cold world.

NICHE. I'm gonna' say it again - **NICHE**. Vriska's reign of terror has become too embellished, and I can't help but feel she's being confused for a very different class at this point. Real Thieves (we can count Pre-Retcon Vriska) might get ahead of themselves and do damage, but there's limits, and being in the spotlight too long hurts their eyes even if they wanted to be there in the first place. That sense of unworthiness always kicks in and balances them out (eventually), and it's FUCKING WEIRD if you write a Thief without one - daddy issues, not a fucking god complex!

Let's not beat around the bush: Thieves are jerks. Sure, they might openly know this and embrace it, but they're guilty of far more than the occasional faux-pas. Impatience and sadism makes them consistently rude to strangers, and marginally better to friends until they feel slighted. They develop grudges too easily, only needing half a reason to swing and rarely thinking through potential fallout. A Witch may hinge too much on a concept of blamelessness, but a Thief finding comfort in *being* blamed is an unsustainable road; too often they try to earn respect on terms they made themselves (possibly on the spot), heartfelt but still transparently selfish to increasingly exasperated friends. What empowers them also binds them, as Thieves hold mistrust to gifts without a thrill of the chase, and instinctively double-down when challenged - concerned friends and "society" blur together. Behind the bravado, they're hurting...but more hurt means more bravado, and sometimes the only way to prove superiority is to sabotage the competition. Thieves can be outright abusive in reinforcing weaknesses (often their opposed aspect, but any bullying will do), too keen to cite their own traumas while recreating it in others. Still, they can't ignore that this behavior doesn't actually make the pain go away, making them burn out on their own (eventually) even without a confrontation. Feeling misreable

is something they always do alone, and when the bravado breaks, that's all they've got.

Vriska did alot of wrong things. She didn't have to, and using predestination as an excuse is more proof she's a jerk. I'm somewhat miffed Homestuck's self-declared "most important character" is so often forgiven of being a murdering bootlicker because "she had a rough childhood", and "she did so much good too!". I can't keep track of when or if Hussie changed his mind about her, and I don't care - in real life, people like that rarely get the boon of *saving the world* to offset their relentless bullshit, and I still got arguments for Spider8itch anyways! I advocate humility here; not just being a "benevolent" asshole.

Prospit Thieves are likely to say that being an asshole is mostly okay so long as you have your reasons - and they have plenty. Sure, they have a clear sense of right and wrong, but will either have excuses for not doing the right thing or have some messed up methods to reach it. Their sense of being "cheated" by the world often goes unchecked: they are *always* the underdog, even if they've been on top for awhile. This lack of critical assessment leaves them chasing goals that distract more than repair, undertaking challenges often precisely because they're unqualified. While wounds are an open book to anyone who asks (but not up for criticism (or therapy)), it really doesn't seem to slow them down at all. They're also frustratingly off the mark in confronting societal injustice; it's not that society must be uprooted for it's failures, but more that the system made a "mistake" in failing to accomodate their specific needs - fighting to the top of the system more often than fighting the system. While they can still be abrasive friends to keep around, they're less likely to antagonize people for sport, or personally define themselves by it; they are, however, more likely to downplay what they're doing, and misread appropriate levels of retaliation. There's genuine optimism in their hearts, with legitimately heroic goals to match...they just have a tendency to prioritize the catharsis of revenge and personal glory first, failing to see how that might get in the way.

Sometimes it's hard writing nice things about Thieves because I keep thinking about Vriska, but there's alot of "scoundrels with hearts of gold" both in fiction and in reality (we almost dated but she was an anti-masker). Understanding why they think what they do is important to challenge them.

Derse Thieves are likely to say that being an asshole is completely okay if you have comedic timing - and while they have plenty, they also know better. Creatures of habit, they're unashamed of their worst qualities, insufferably proud of their best, and crystal clear in exactly half of what they want; the remaining half is far too embarrassing, even if it doesn't really make that much sense why they think that. The good side of this self-awareness is that they have a much better sense how their pain affects them, how far is too far, and their capacity for harm...and the bad side is that their pain is harder to ignore, they're prone to cross lines cause they *can*, and they may find

validation in open cruelty by embellishing their nature from “misanthropic” to “nefarious”. While this does make them much more dangerous friends, it also softens them in a peculiar way: if they’re gonna’ be evil, someone else oughta’ be good. It’s easier for them to stay on the fringes of groups and not over-involve themselves, easier for them to process differences of opinion, and it’s easier to see when their bad habits aren’t even making *themselves* feel better. If they trust someone enough to open up, there is raw sincerity in taking every word to heart, even if it’s harder still for them to truly change. They might be an asshole, but they’ll happily be *your* asshole.

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ROGUES don’t say much - either of substance, or at all. They’re pretty easy to talk over, and may even encourage you to do so. They enjoy distractions, are pleasantly social in sharing those distractions with people they like, and evasive (perhaps guilty) towards those they don’t. They’re awkward, but they aren’t really looking for people to take care of them; more realistically, they’re hoping to take care of others, even if they’re not entirely sure how to ask or when it would be appropriate. On a surface level, they’re isolated, and insistent that anyone else is more qualified to help. Know them a little, and they’re reliable in loose advice, openly unsubstantiated and bordering on platitudes. Get to their inner circle, and they’re fiercely protective; ironclad resolve, with a warm soul that will never morally allow you to be sad even if they have to fight you on it. The weight of these beliefs isn’t something they’ll brag about (or often recognize), and the moments extreme enough to make it all manifest run the risk of scaring them away altogether. It’s hard enough to convince people they deserve happiness, and it’s harder still to follow your own advice.

“The best Homestuck character is Roxy, or you’re wrong”

An Heir can reform laws all they want, but Rogues can’t wait for the law to catch up (if ever) when there’s good deeds that need doing; they **steal** their aspect on behalf of others, offering more daring solutions, more direct advice, and poaching/reclaiming what would’ve otherwise been wrapped up in tradition, bureaucracy, guilt, anxiety, etc. What matters is people (certainly their favourites) being happy,

and Rogues excel at subverting and loosening the grip of ideological chains. Course, while they're just about as steadfast as Heirs, they're not nearly as stable; too often they hesitate, hold their tongues, avoid making promises, and are unlikely to invoke a miracle on command or in public. They're as prone to rise to challenges and be there when people need them, but they keep at a reasonable distance if someone else has things covered, and flounder when overwhelmed by too many demands or for too long. Rogues require autonomy to do their best work, and being in the sidelines minimizes how many people and rules they have to argue with at one time; it's a big accomplishment to be someone they speak freely with. Make no mistake, a Rogue's aspect is not to be underestimated; it's forgiveness to mistakes past and current, overdue happiness, stolen medicine, the simple pleasures that are easy to miss, a secret garden, a peace worth fighting for, an injustice to correct, and a piece of their soul crafted to fill a spot in yours.

Unsurprisingly, Rogues also seem to come from households like Heirs, where something was definately missing (or hugely mishandled) and hurting everyone.

Unlike Heirs, they couldn't do anything about it.

Most of the damage a Rogue does are the result of what they didn't do; the times they should've spoken up, the times they let people push them around, the harm from putting everyone else first. Making exceptions for every bleeding heart, Rogues can find themselves pulled in every direction at once, all while unsure of their own identity. Even with that in mind, it's hard to ignore the potential dangers of a philosophy with "My friends did nothing wrong and deserve the world" as a starting point. Wager too little, and Rogues accomplish nothing besides hugs and excuses; go too far, and all they do is fray friendships trying to know someone better than they know themselves. That middle ground to negotiate friends into reinvention is delicate, and all the good-intentions in the world can't change that some people either aren't ready to change or don't want to. Rogues learn this hard, especially the times that trying to force something only made it worse...but they seem to have the most shame for times their friends truly *did* put all their trust in them, and reality simply failed to budge, or was complicated enough to intimidate. Guilty Rogues invoke their aspect to weaken faith in their own words, further isolate from the people around them, break commitments they shouldn't, and otherwise blot out the hostilities and complexities of the real world...which is tragic, from someone with a gift in meeting those dangers head on.

You can lose a Rogue before they actually leave. Almost never a blowup, but, if you take them for granted for too long, if you offer too little back, their heart stops being in it even if their hands are still helping. They're not used to voicing their own thoughts,

obviously, but they don't have to; most of the time, they just stop showing up someday. If they do talk to someone about it, it's clear they already made their mind up.

Prospit Rogues aren't looking for trouble, but will try to fix what they don't overlook. They're overtly shy, but have an underlying confidence they don't seem to notice. The very definition of passive, they frequently are completely blindsided by their own impulses, doing their job almost entirely on instinct and consistently failing to recognize what was so special about it. Unfortunately, this makes them more prone to promise nothing and isolate more, which might work, or not, and isn't likely to shake them in any great deal. While they may give the appearance of a true blank slate, they're still 100% Roguish; sure, they'll follow people who ask for help (within reason), but it's really *vibing* with these do-or-die moments that kick them into high-gear that give them form as a motherfucking *rebel*. Just as well, they can be pretty blunt when someone's exceeded their patience and crossed a line - not cruel, really, just firm. Prospit Rogues might never crack, but they're more than (perhaps even not) easy-going. If they don't know what they'll stand against, they're never going to figure out what they stand for - even if it's staring them in the face.

I know 4 Prospit Rogues personally. This is the most unbiased and immediate entry I can write and it's of the people who know themselves the LEAST! Ah well. You know Rufioh (Homestuck Rufioh, not...not Hook-Rufioh, obviously) is probably not a good role model for cheating on his girlfriend, but he's still so damn charming you almost forget. I'd peg Skylla from friendsim as one, with the benefit of hindsight.

Derse Rogues are ready for trouble, staying vigilant to what others might overlook. They're hardly shy, but they struggle with confidence in a way they don't want others to notice. Noticably, they lack the Derse Heir staple of sporadic yet intense violence on their fellow man (I cannot stress this enough: PROBABLY had it coming). They definately think about it, either as a joke suggestion or personal grumbling, but *almost* always their resentments are vented at a safe distance or in a safe environment. More than a little self-loathing reinforces their barriers and deflections, resulting in advice through a filter while the rest of it (and them) holds back...and yet, they're so much more diligent in what they do, both less likely to turn people away and less likely to give up. They've got a public service to perform, and it's free for the only people that mattered in the first place. Of course, while they only need a few pushes to talk back to jerks, it's pulling teeth to get them to set boundries with their loved ones - if *they* don't, who will? It's not an ego thing, but Derse Rogues are likely to think people in a rut will stay in that rut unless they personally intervene. To this end, they frequently fail to notice the toll it takes on their own mental health, and make excuses for some clearly sketchy people when they *really* shouldn't - or, more accurately, don't have to. Jokes and teasing aren't their best quality, let alone their *limit*: it's looking someone directly in the eyes and

slapping them in the face for being so cruel to themselves - let alone anyone else.

Nepeta deserved better, I'll fucking cut anyone who says otherwise.

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FAE (ZEALOTS, INNOVATORS, AUTOMATONS)

Serving an aspect has limits - not as much as just "knowing" the damn thing, but *still*. So, there are two classes who do not simply ask all the good their aspect is capable of, but what more it could do; what can be **created**, what blood can be wrought from a stone? Since this is all going on in their head, it...well, they're really just doing what they wanted to do, despite this internal dialogue with all that is righteous in the universe. Obviously, they're dangerous when they get out of hand, but they always make it sound like such a good idea. It makes them a little less human, and a little more mystical.

Kinda stumped on words, personally. I mean Hussie went with "european medieval", but it is fun (and sometimes, beneficial) to translate that into other cultures and work through the platonic ideals of it all. I mean his symbolism was all manner of "mystical creatures"; elves, fairies (godmothers too), spirits, youkai, the unexplained and inhuman. Probably not demons, but nothing is technically stopping you.

MAIDS are intimidating, relentless, and the *very archetypal definition* of a workaholic. Barring the most extreme of circumstances, a Maid will already be juggling several plates at once and only be speaking to you out of formality, idle curiosity, or requesting you move into position for their next plan. Altruistic, virtuous, and independent, their confidence can be infectious *despite* their schisms with the wills of others. Maids always have a plan; if they don't, they make one; if you give them one, they fix it; if you fight them, they do what they wanted to do anyways. They'll readily (which is to say impatiently) remind you they don't need cooperation for getting everyone's lives in order, and alot of the time, that isn't an insult but just a set of strange standards. They're aware the workload they've taken on is unfair, because they know asking other people for help in what they're building would be unreasonable. They might like company and some acknowledgement, but they still work alone. Both a blessing and a curse, Maids are incapable of slowing down when they get going - and that's when, not if.

If you're thinking about career women in movies who end the film giving up on that promotion so they can spend more time with their kids or go on a vacation, you can skip this entry entirely because you already understand who I'm talking about.

Maids are generous and pretty darn incorruptible, but the way they help people is based on principles and assumptions left unchecked. They're bound to the same gut-morality as Pages, with a brain hyped up on representing virtue but with 80% less doubt and unworthiness. What takes Pages years to carefully muster the courage to attempt, Maids chase without hesitation - the impulses are taken at face value, averting internal conflict. Maids edge on the brink of solipsism without falling in, open to new ideas and suggestions *just enough* to argue with it; it's not going to be a *fair* argument, but it gives them the bare minimum of self-awareness to navigate reality and break the limits of what some idiot thought was possible. Trusting in more than they see, a Maid **creates** their aspect; they power through protest, "correcting" the world into the utopia they already expected to be there. More than confidence, the nature of *what* a Maid is creating differentiates them from Pages: over-saturated and singular, bold statements and rash action, negotiation unnecessary, harmony overrated. A Maid is the living embodiment of their aspect; it's their blood, their flesh, their doctrine, their only acceptable results, their drive to succeed, their most terrifying certainties, their most harmful compulsions, the completely unsubstantiated assumptions they have full confidence in, and the fantasies they breathe as facts that either are or *goddamn should be*.

This is a wild concept, but if you put unimaginable amounts of pressure on a child and only validate them when they "succeed", you're likely to get a Maid...or, you know, a Page, and there does seem to be that AFAB/AMAB split. It's pretty depressing. Living as yourself, for someone else; it's hard to take the reins back of your life, even when all you do is pull the cart. The thing is, if you don't also realize how heavy it is, you're less likely to protest...

The lack of cowardice is an improvement from Pages, the lack of teamwork more questionable, but it's the lack of *hesitation* that is the problem. Without the guilt and disassociation/rejection, Maids not only fail to notice when their instincts have pushed them to a bad idea, but may not actually *care*; in ignoring compromise or intervention from the very people they're supposedly helping, they loop back around to the selfless arrogance of Mages. This is to say nothing of being able to romanticize and justify intricate plans of revenge and humiliation, blurring universal principle and personal spite. They can be slowed down and brought to the drawing board, but you have to have their *utmost* respect to do so, and there's still no guarantee they'll stay. Beyond external damage, eternally plagued by the mantra "If you want something done right, do it yourself" is taxing on their internals. While stuffing down weakness for potentially *years* is all very impressive, breakdowns are inevitable, followed by a resolve that this is their mess to clean up. Look, Maids "overwrite reality" and "push past the limits of what's possible" as metaphors - in truth, they're just human beings. They're not literally maids (usually),

and not literally powerful magic creatures either (...*usually*). Maids do know who they are if they slow down, they do *get* there's a world outside their bubble of purpose, but it's confusing compared to their comforts - a job well done is a dopamine hit, after all. They work alone, and they do indeed work wonders, but they don't have to live for their work. Most Maids accept only half of this advice, claiming to have recovered from a spiral and feel totally refreshed; it's up to the friends around them to insist they need a month's vacation, and not a weekend.

"Had to be me; someone else might've gotten it wrong." It's a good line for Mages, Pages, Maids, and the last rung on the ladder we'll get to. I think Maids truly do encapsulate the purity of that belief more than anyone else, but that doesn't mean they're the best; they highlight the strengths and limitations both, and are so stable they live with it.

Prospit Maids are ruled by the singular law that they can do anything they put their minds to. Cheery and upbeat, able to conquer any challenge with a smile...or at least, utterly convinced they *should*. They set out to be perfect workers, supportive friends, interesting hobbyists, and ideal citizens. While well-mannered or even sweet, they're still impatient and competitive with others. Differences of opinion or plans going off-the-rails often finds them confused that was even a possibility, leaving them doubling-down with failure not being an option - which means an inarguable brick wall is very likely to cause them to crack. Even then, keeping that smile on will mean pulling a few excuses out of their ass, and they don't have to be good ones if they only have to convince themselves. Prospit Maids are generally slow to realize how different of a wavelength they're on...but the lessons they learn is usually "trust people less, trust myself more", while still sticking around friends despite growing irritation. They have uncanny talent in their chosen career path, but being "less-than-perfect" and being "a failure" are too often treated as the same thing - definately still Pagey, but they haven't got time to weep when they can bleed.

I understand the *idea* of having Jane go evil tyrant, but I still feel like I missed something there. Or, they did.

Derse Maids are ruled by the singular law that human beings will dissapoint them. Snarky and openly detached, they'd prefer you don't waste their time while they focus on their work; If you don't agree with it, or think it's a waste of their talent, they'll do it *more*. More aware of how they tick, they're interested selectively of society's ideals: generally labour and career, *maybe* art. They'll probably skip past being polite to people, in order to redirect that energy back into what matters to them. If they burn out, they might laugh and acknowledge it - and then keep going. It's difficult to tell where the lines are and when they've already been crossed, meaning they'll

probably only voice their truest frustrations at you all at once, unexpectedly, possibly minutes after trying to fix your problem. They're dispassionate to most attacks (or requests), ruthless when the moment strikes them, and frighteningly ready (if not *excited*) for the consequences their behavior elicits. Trust them to save the world, burn it, or both.

One of my best friends in the world. Sometimes, she gets pissed off and doesn't speak to me for a couple months. I accept it.

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SYLPHS live for other people - they're unyieldingly optimistic, supportive to a fault, and treat "friendship" as a professional and formal contract. Productive and altruistic in equal measure, Sylphs preach black and white universal morality, always with an explanation or accomodation for when it contrasts reality. While more than a little snippy to slights, their default worldview is so gosh darned optimistic that they'll have a smile plastered on their face a majority of the time regardless. Despite this high energy, most remain on the backline, alternating between proxy enthusiasm or putting the "passive" back in "passive-aggressive". Don't get me wrong, they're duty bound to provide some insane support that would be unthinkable to outright ask someone, but Sylphs get carried away far too easily; terrible with boundaries, personal space, and anything less than a hard "no". One shouldn't be reckless in encouraging them to get out of the bleachers, or take their wildest ideas at face value; not until they find a way to reconcile an alarming amount of personal uncertainty with what they want to ask. Sylphs are the lynchpins in any friend group - or only convinced they are, and dangerous in what they've decided that entails.

"I don't feel like I can be friends with someone without helping them."

Sylphs live for other people - or rather, tend to believe that, despite being a sentient human with wants and needs. The currents of their aspect are strong enough that there is a temptation to believe it will harmonize the world no matter what...but they're *just barely* not fully convinced it'll happen without them reminding everyone and staying on guard. Sylphs over-involve themselves even more than Knights, but pull the same trick as Page-Maid in being able to **create** ways out of fail-states; fudge the numbers, never say die, and rewrite the rules

whenever they get in *anyone's* way. While this adaptability makes them less obviously (or, outwardly) contentious than Knights, they aren't actually adapting their aspect; failure is not an option, and if their friends aren't "succeeding" (**A VERY SUBJECTIVE CONCEPT**), then something *must* be wrong with the script. Despite being dismissive or derisive towards their autonomy, Sylphs are still lucid outsiders to their prose, strategizing how to get their beliefs heard to as many people as possible. Their aspect is their first instincts, their service to humanity, the contractual obligations of friendship, the life calendar they plan for everyone else, the fun ways they'd "upgrade" their friends, and the ways they nurture others in a way they want to be appreciated...even though they're shy, or defensive, towards the idea of reciprocation.

My mother is in her 60's, and has been loud (very, very loud) about the wonders therapy has done for her; apparently, up until now, she hasn't realized how traumatic her childhood actually was, despite the facts remaining "constant screaming and beatings". I asked a Sylph I know (a very close friend, mind you) what their childhood was like. They responded, in complete sincerity, with an uneasy "I don't know".

I'm a bit concerned.

Sylphs live for other people - and sometimes, that means pinching their cheek and hijacking their life completely. With more stable smiles and more contentment in their (percieved) marginalized place in the universe, Sylphs lack the reliable explosions Knights exhibit - but when they *do*, they're playing with twice the gunpowder. Every problem a Sylph percieves is their responsibility, and their creative optimism means anyone not accepting their encouragement must just hate being happy. Sylphs grumble more than Knights, but don't "snap" the same way - they don't burn bridges to isolate, they burn bridges to trap you with them. The helper instinct never stops, and the idea there's just the *tiniest* motive of pride, resentment or helplessness seems difficult for them to notice; depression and desperation are old friends, always something under control, always something they could work around. Remember that this is a brain that's decided it's their job to have all the answers, and failing that job isn't the problem: the problem is that they don't know who they are if they *don't*, especially since acting out like this is usually spurned by sharp setbacks, humiliation, wakeup calls, and other bad news. The world is always so close to perfect in their eyes, but closing that gap is impossible - and not going to fix what's twisted up anyways.

Prospit Sylphs have the most stability in being a good friend and generous provider. They support everyone, give lots of second chances when they shouldn't, and only ask that everyone is civil. If they do overstep, however, they also have the biggest blindspot: "do

right for right's sake", sure, but they can't *stop* doing right. Sometimes they'll toil making gifts or gestures for people who either don't want it (or didn't appreciate it the correct way), and sometimes they just can't let go of their particular status quo. They simply don't moderate their expectations, and the world will dissappoint. At worst, they'll frame selfishness as the assumed world order; trying to push people to be only the hyper-exaggerated image in their head, cruel at anything they interpret as "unpleasent", and failing to understand how authoritative they've become; the fact that they're arguing against their friend's actual words doesn't seem to register. Don't let this distract from the fact that they will accomplish alot of good by not giving up on people and trying to help them succeed...they just shouldn't be *complacent* in that, and assume that any good (or harm) they do is cosmically permitted - let alone ordained.

Hi mom.

Derse Sylphs intertwine "I'll die for my friends :)" and "I'll cut anyone who fucks with me :)" in the same phillosophy, and occasionally in the same sentence. They're exactly as aggressively helpful as any Sylph, but no stranger to the "aggression" part; if the world needs omlettes, that means no hesitation in breaking eggs. Unfortunately, given that eggs are people, they run into the familiar Derse issue where being aware of your problems is not the same as fixing them. Stern, stressed, and a little prideful, this breed of Sylph is still capable of presenting as the backline beck-and-call in a way that's hard to differentiate from Prospits; they're a touch more openly self-depricating, and a few notches more fond of sassy zingers. They truly differentiate themselves when they get invested in a project, thriving on forward momentum with a touch of chaos; at home in the eye of the storm, but with an outside impression of "crazy mad scientist". While twice as venomous in insults, Derse Sylphs are more outwardly uncomfortable with total authority, unlikely to assume and prone to cracking when "left in charge". The contrasts of helpless sychophant, proxy parasite, over-protective parent, and wild god-complex are plainly visible even to them, and it's all as terrifying as it is exciting. They're the most in need of encouragement to get out there and strut their stuff, but it's still important to make sure they don't get in too much trouble.

I always felt Pearl from Steven Universe was a fair example. She might be infamously "salty", but her devotion and belief is genuine, and almost out of her control. Creature of habit, and likely Hopebound. On that note, I actually met a Derse Sylph of Hope once. It...it went poorly.

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ROYALS

(JUDGES, SKEPTICS, SPOILSPORTS)

You keep pushing and pulling, something just might snap. Even if you want to steal it, you can't admit it - or won't notice. It all gets caught up in words and misdirection, because the world (and these two) revel in complications. Their aspect is brittle, and corrosive to what's around it; whether they want to or not, they will end up **destroying** it, and destroy far more with what they *don't*. What values it has must survive doubt and dissection, and anything left (or hidden) will be valued over anything else. We have upped the stakes from rebels resisting society, to society resisting the mystical unknown. Neither was ever going to win, but it is the politics and power of royalty that drag everyone else into their fight - their burden is to know what's best for you.

Look, they're not evil people, but they've got some really unhealthy compulsions that they don't know how to turn off, and there's going to be no way to help them through it without being harsh - even moreso than this document has been before. Even if they turn up their nose and pride themselves on being unconvinced, of refusing to admit their own reputation represented, they're gonna look pretty stupid when it's obvious to everyone around them...and hey, smartypants, you don't *actually* think your opinion is the only one that matters, do you?

Buckle up.

PRINCES (or princesses) are...*complicated*. Most would likely describe themselves as "shy", or "people-pleasers" on the inside, but that can be a stark contrast to what they actually *do*. Princes take charge readily, confront what they see as injustice, make their moral disagreements well known, and struggle to articulate and live by a perfect philosophy. Even if they're reluctant to reach out, they pride themselves on being there for the people they care about - but "pride" is the operative word. High personal standards and good intentions can blur into dangerous compromises, and a slew of rationalizations to avoid apologies. It is disingenuous to say Princes aren't ones to look out for, despite a capability to be loyal friends and strategists. They frequently reinvent themselves, constructing a persona, reputation, and guidelines that ensure they are both the resident advisor and some definition of "cool"; however, doubt and self-loathing will decompose this mask, making them an emotional burden with increasingly erratic and drastic decisions. At the breaking point, another baptism; not so much an apology as a "don't worry", a new "clean slate", and perhaps a new address or social circle...yet, no matter how segmented a Prince's life looks, they're stuck with the same internal strife. A destructive nature that cannot destroy itself, seducing them to burn away "falsehoods" until the world makes

sense; it won't make them happy, it won't make them friends, and it won't even make them *correct*. Again, Princes are complicated, but the problem is that they keep trying to make everything around them equally complicated.

I might still have a few Princes here. It's unlikely, but, maybe you think "Hey this is starting to sound like me, though it's harsh". You're probably about to be pissed at the stuff I say next though, so, I guess most of this is for other people going "pff, yeah this is totally steve" and I'm sorry Steve but it's a fact of life that Princes hate being called Princes. It sounds like a catch-22, but that's only if you value your opinion more than everyone else you know...which you might try to justify one way or another here. Something to work on, right? Maybe? Come on Steve, work with me.

Princes do not take well to other people trying to "sum them up" - which is a great way to sum them up. While they (usually) avoid the caustic swagger of Thieves, the fundamentals remain: chipped shoulders, self-reliance, eager-to-please yet reluctant-to-trust. The ideals of a Thief become high enough that they cannot justify openly self-serving behavior, but the isolation and ambition are worse. It is not enough to be a fixer or an "in-the-know" showoff; Princes gravitate to leadership (without ever admitting it), with a firm grasp of all the answers and how things Should Be Done. Struggling to achieve unbiased objectivity while compelled to pick apart everything in front of them, Princes criticize, reject, and annul parts of their aspect they disagree with - in short, they **destroy** it. Their aspect is still wholly theirs, and they embody it in both personal identity and passions, but they'll never take the easy road - they might even find a dark thrill in breaking parts of it down. This is often what leads to them lowballing with philosophies that cauterize more than mend: healing involving hurting, hope being depressing, truth being fluid, etc. A Prince's aspect is an academia that vexes them, the contraband they relieve you of, an endangered beauty, a fragile peace, an embarrassing hope, the lover that rejected them, a sickness they recklessly amputate, a nightmare no one else shares, a crown of thorns, and what defines them in a way they'll never admit.

Dirk Strider literally "raised himself", which is kind of amusing to imagine for an infant in an isolated apartment. However, it is apt in how Princes describe their upbringings, which resemble far more the hostility Eridan experienced. Usually. Like a good 80% of the time. If not parents, I do know a Prince (who's always been rather well adjusted) who says he adopted this way of thinking purely through his own autonomy. It's odd to think about, and I know they get all futzy when they get examined, but damn if there's not something TO all this...

The unfortunate truth is, Princes can do an alarming amount of damage to the people around them despite good intentions - an impulse to find problems will, when overextended, create them. They can be too involved in other's affairs while being unsolicited or simply unsuited, and not notice their overprotective nature creating unhealthy power dynamics. They are often confrontational and argumentative, protective of their dignity often as much *if not more*

than their friends - and often, *to* those friends. Provide enough pressure, and they often default to a familiar argument of "Everyone is twisting my words, out to get me!". In the absolute worst possible circumstances, Princes can fall to rejecting their aspect wholesale as a corrupting influence that only they can see through; conveniently (and hypocritically), the sum of this often results in an interpretation of their values that *only* benefits themselves. Abuse and manipulation at this point is rationalized as an immutable fact of their nature or life; trying to console them rarely reaps results, as does reprimending them that the damage they've done is still somehow worse than what they're willing to admit. Beyond the speeches, there's just someone who cracked trying to do everything themselves, and felt stupid for trying in the first place. It is difficult to negotiate with someone who may prefer to turn their life into a trainwreck rather than accept a hug.

"And now I feel my calling is to break apart and fall to pieces; better yet, invent a brand new method of ascension."

"So here I am, respectfully and royally destroying any chance of getting back on your good [graces]."

"So what? Did you want me to say sorry?
Should I apologize when you ignore me?
Didn't ask to be right or to be lonely.
Or to be hatched into an ugly story."

- "Ugly Story" by PhemieC, 2013 (i think)

Prospit Princes are peacekeepers, but only to their definition of "peace". They cultivate a reputation for being sturdy, loyal, and trustworthy, while not shy about particular merits they've earned or skills they've practiced. The creation of their philosophy and rules to life is slow, cautious, and deliberate - the execution and extolling, however, is casual, even reckless. They're emotionally transparent, and trying to look confident is an act of politeness and not deception. Unfortunately, this transparency extends to what they take issue with; Prospit Princes do not hesitate to speak their mind on moral disagreements, (perceived) offences to them or those around them, or just general "bad vibes". They're frequently blindsided by how intense and overprotective they come off, but mistrust alternatives to their martyrdom. They rarely turn their backs from their aspect entirely, but fixate on the flaws of method rather than question the end-goal (let alone their ability to interpret it). If people reject their oversight, they're likely to assume that's someone else's fault for "not getting it", and these arguments can make them more hassle than help. Even if they keep outbursts under wraps, it doesn't mean the ugly side won't manifest in refusing to let (other people's (debatable)) crimes go, while expecting a certain level of respect for their protections past and present. This makes for some *bad* power dynamics, but they're

incredibly difficult to confront; too easily blaming everyone else then priding themselves on being the first to forgive. These miscommunications and schisms of perception can be mended, and learn both what their friends want and what *they* want...or, devolve into an echo chamber of bitterness and sacrifice, while the Prospit Prince learns who will or won't prove "unreasonable". The worst of their manipulations and distorted reality are guided by "intuition" - if a Prospit Prince truly has abandoned their principles, they are the last to know, and the very last to admit it.

I had a long, long history with a certain friend. He always called it a "scientist impulse", which was as wrong as when Eridan did it. Everybody's big brother - and he'll snarl at you if you contest it. His behavior is perfectly encapsulated in characters of Homestuck's extended material, to the usual eerie degree these things are...I doubt he'd be happy about that. Doubt he'd accept it. All I can really do is prove his defenses unnecessary, and see where things go from there. At least others can recognize it.

Oh. And the DC animated Superman. Pitch perfect exaple there. Pretty healthy too. Ish.

Derse Princes are the most deliberately obfuscative people you'll ever meet: an eternal engine of disparate reinvention and self-sabotage, masked by any number of excuses besides the somewhat obvious truth - insecurity. They reliably "start" as teenage supervillains with too much to prove (and transparently high opinions of themselves). This evolves into a superposition of shifting masks: eager and loyal friends with surprising honesty about their fears, burdened protectors making the hard decisions, suave yet casual charmers looking to do good without straining themselves, sarcastic sadists happy to dissapoint others with "how the world really works", or a martyring "born-broken" monster who ruins everything and everyone around them. While Prospits dip into all these pools, it's Derse Princes who lose sight of their own truth and extend past their own limits; too cruel to loved ones, they crack into devotion begging requital; too desperate to prove their "magnificent" individuality, they crack into a helpless "victim of circumstance" begging forgiveness. Among all these things, they are *still* their aspect despite themselves, often preferring to preach "nihilistic freedom" rather than the passions they find too embarrassing to dare admit. Of course, that "freedom" pits them against everything and everyone around them, too obvious in what they're scared to lose. Cruelty and treachery come naturally, as does the guilt seeping through the rationalizations. Ultimately, this "tragic and failed protector" is one more mask from someone who doesn't want to be hurt anymore...but it is the hardest to take off.

I am nothing close to unbiased on this one. I've known some eggs.

It's funny how much the "tortured genius, too smart to be happy" archetype gets passed around. Cause like, they're almost all Derse Princes, but it's a very specific instance that doesn't reflect the whole. You can look at Dr. House and Rick Sanchez and go "Hope and Life", but they're still exaggerated in how far they go and how much the world facilitates their paticular egos. It's Bojack Horseman that stands out to me, because the

swath of flashbacks, progression, regression, small moments, big moments, conclusions by himself and by the people around him, that's like the ENTIRE JOURNEY of a Derse Prince (of Light, specifically). Frankly if you watch the whole show, it's a better crash course than I could ever do.

That, or the Pesterquest Dirk Strider route. Hearing nervous "definitely a knight of heart shut up" young Dirk interact next to "looks like he would have a mental breakdown if he lost an argument" bad-timeline adult Dirk is a good display of how even Homestuck's own definition of Prince accounts for the spectrum of reinvention - despite it always, eventually, boiling down to the same question:

>Trust your friends

>Trust yourself

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Complicated compromises, juxtaposed fragments; politician and paragon, penultimate in parallel. Heartfelt pleas and heroic battles, transcribed by the masses as lectures and posturing from the would-be, the runner-up, the "almost" all-you-want-to-be. Prisoner to silk and satin, suffering from success, misunderstood misanthrope, no one can see you eye to eye; you watch over the people you love, and they feel looked down upon. You can't settle, you won't; you won't let others. Sole skeptic to superstition, you scrutinize and subdue sorcery; smelt it down and sift through the slag to see what survives. Science called sin or just superfluous, the ignorant and illiterate iterate - it irritates. A Prince owes his people, and all interrogations of the imperial inquisition that make war to folklore are necessary - yet, flirting with demotion, to be disavowed by dissent. Why then? The motive? Protection by the wary? No, more simple; beneath spite and sneer is the spurned and scarred, unable to trust what could not be tamed, seeking some veneer of victory in vindictive violence while welding and wielding weapons of all viscera violated. An usurper, so be it, it's what they always expected - or just you? All that initiative, no imagination; who are you besides your birthright and burden? A Destroyer, only? To your hundred explanations, one retort: "**can't**, or **won't**?" You could be a good man, so long as you stop trying to be the greatest. You could be a heroic savior, if you stopped worrying who will notice. You could be a good King, but only when you stop wanting it, let alone thinking you ever had to be.

Don't break yourself, break the cycle; conquer yourself.

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BARDS are a stark contrast to Princes, with a lackadaisical presentation that rarely gives way to action. It does happen on rare occasion - expensive gifts, declarations of love, heartfelt tears, unyielding rage - but 99% of the time they're just discussing such

subjects, waiting for whatever their “moment” is supposed to look like. They fancy themselves philosophers, threading a paradoxical needle between not being as smart as they think they are, and still being smarter than they let on. Their detachment to issues lets them approach things calmer and more careful than those too invested, finding useful perspectives from unexpected and untapped places. Their semi-incoherent ramblings are second nature, handling any number of topics with a casual and often disarming vibe. Supportive and well-intentioned (usually) despite being supremely irreverent, they aim to push people out of their comfort zones, dancing through the conversation in a way that can make things *click* for the people around them. These revelations are what a Bard lives for, because their comedy, easygoing nature, and distractability aren’t distraction from their intelligence: they’re the method of it.

If you’re thinking of the common “wise stoner” archetype, you’re on point. Bards act like that sober, however - despite their propensity to seek out substances. To that end, there aren’t a lot of fictional examples in starring roles, but I’ve still got my guesses on Joe Rogan and Eric Andre.

Bards might love their mystique, but they really are just Rogues^2. Disagreeing with the lifestyles of others is done without hesitation, downplaying one’s sincerity with levity evolves into outright clownmanship, and difficulty articulating oneself turns into reveling in misdirection. The crisis-response impulse is in there, but where a Rogue tries to ignore a pull to drastic solutions, a Bard successfully ignores a pull to impossible revolutions; always talking about what they *could* do, but only doing anything after everyone assumed it was all talk. You can’t ask them to do anything; they’ll catch you only after they spent 20 minutes deciding you are, indeed, falling. They do stand for *something*, but it’s twisted inside out and lost in a fog, where the way they want the world to be is either impossible or indecipherable. To weaken the grip of beliefs on others recklessly (and often for sport), a Bard **destroys** their aspect; as a convoluted contrarian, they invite others to question its hold through debate, and allow it to die through apathy or contempt its most basic tenants and principles. The “grand cause” rarely adds up to more than playful spitballing, but a keen nose will smell gasoline waiting for a match. A Bard may prefer their spiritual fulfillment to remain elusive and mysterious, but they hold no power here; their aspect is the first and favourite thing to fight you on, an impossible standard, their everchanging incontestable opinions, what won’t hold them back (or accountable), their biggest blind spot, a topic of fascinating theory and no praxis, a lucky guess, a *wrong* guess they defend anyways, a broken fire alarm, a dead parrot, an out of nowhere nuclear solution that changes everyone’s lives forever, and, sometimes, very rarely, something they know better than everyone else in the room.

That Bards started asking questions at a young age is no surprise. But finding commonalities for how it made them feel, how commonly it was outright abusive, even sibling dynamics, isn't easy unless I'm willing to hold some of them at gunpoint. There is a Bard who stood out to me, who got a ramblin' on recieving "Blood" on the Extended Zodiac. Apparently, his family had lots of relatives passing through and supporting each other, but he didn't like that no one explained why he was supposed to care about these strangers. Since no one gave him a good enough answer, he called them by their first names without specifying "uncle" or "aunt" or whatever. He's proud of that disrespect, and remained proud on his own interpretations of family for years to come, but it sure as hell proves my point.

While it *is* impressive when they show flashes of genius, and those rare righteous calls of a new world order blow Rogues out of the water, those are both in the rare moments when their jumbled jigsaw of a worldview snap into place - and *none* of that guarantees it'll be actually beneficial for anyone. It's appropo to call a Bard a wildcard, but beyond the pizazz, it highlights that they're a human being you can never truly trust. They're supremely lethargic, undermining anyone who expects more of them and so often failing to get why anyone has a problem with them in the first place; content that they have all the answers they could ever need, the world - and *people in that world* - is passing them by. Unqualified and unsolicited, their efforts to offend, enlighten, and question too often highlight how truly out-of-their-depth they are; laughing off wake-up calls and their own critics isn't as funny as they think it is. Bards say everything and nothing, believe themselves humble and ingenious, dogmatic yet skeptical, reject all restrictions yet constantly judge the lives of others. They can be inspirational gurus, manipulative monsters, emotional anchors or common shmucks, and intentionally blur those lines as much as possible. They delight in contradiction and confusion, too often thinking vague answers, directionless arguments, and wiggling out of problems means "winning". Good or bad, they're averse to any change besides their own; even then, you cannot accept them as they are, because even that is illusionary or temporary. Whether they're joking, theorizing, imploring, or threatening, you can only ever agree with them or ignore them; disagreeing goes the way of pigeons and chessboards.

I can't write something a Bard would like reading that isn't wildly inaccurate. Some people have asked me to. I get it. It's definately possible. Maybe someone else could. But this is what I'm good at, and you KNOW who I'm talking about.

Prospit Bards, at least, never push anything past their own, *very specific* definition of "too far". Friendly and accomodating (though perhaps too proud of it), you can chat and joke with them for hours despite their tendencies to veer conversations in strange tangents or ramble to the point of drowning out everyone else out, appearing(/being) disrespectful. Their most offending moments are likely under the influence, and they've probably already picked their poison. They take life one day at a time, and generally try not to worry

beyond that - they can even undercut their own speeches and say it's probably nothing, not being sure where they're going with it. They're against rash action, except for times that they very much aren't, and the disparity between those whims frequently eludes them. In fact, this true lack of self-awareness makes them the much more dangerous of the two, with indignation and impulse taking such priority that they'll stampede over the wills of others. They're the most caught off guard that friends don't see them the way they think, or when they 100% beyond a shadow of a doubt were dead wrong and fucked something up. Remorse or rage still fires off at strange angles, and the reformations they make still border on tone-deaf - and that's whether they reform at all. Prospit Bards can be disarmingly manipulative if they can rationalize it; likely that they're not *really* hurting anyone. Whether they're bitter at life's shortcomings, complacent in unchallenged mental superiority*, or just innocently enjoying the company of their friends, it never really stops their stride.

You remember that Bard I mentioned earlier? Community leader. Kept things going for a decade, then...slipped it. I mean there was a combination of factors, I probably played a part, but that's neither here nor there. What matters is, he snapped a few times, and that righteous indignation stuck with me. After a hundred conversations of everything and nothing, of mindless tangents or greivous sin, he had this fire in his eyes - I recoiled. He was Blood-bound, and he certainly earned it.

Derse Bards are true tricksters, whose legitimate intelligence and contemplations are masked behind a gleeful sadism. While attuned to question and discern meaning from the world like any Bard, they're not even likely to bring it up; their signature move in friendgroups is pushing every joke too far (frequently in *very* poor taste), fraying their ties to others as much as they're allowed, and being deliberately tone-deaf with whatever argument they're trying to make. They often end up with people just yelling at them to *shut the fuck up already*, which is too often met with more laughter, unphased. They're not idiots; square up for an argument, and they'll meet you with some surprisingly well researched speeches you might've never expected from them - though, occasionally, it's nakedly petty and narrow-minded. While this might be legitimately useful insight, they'll keep talking *long* after it isn't, not even pretending to humor counter-arguments. It's not impossible to get under their skin and throw them off-balance, but it's unlikely anything will stick; they recognize what their reputation has given up. However, while genuine bursts of indignation or optimism often fizzle out, a subtle malevolence permeates their habits; Derse Bards can get their kicks out of conscious, long-term manipulation of those they suspect (or make) vulnerable. It probably won't add up to much beyond a thrill, but not much does; give it enough time, and Derse Bards are prone to become apathetic to their own apathy, where epiphanies, empathy, and

philosophical clarity are more apparent than ever. The pertinent question is if anyone will be left at this point.

We've all met at least one.

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MASTERS (ARTISTS, MAGNATES, BRATS)

To create is to reconcile; that reality failed to meet the picture in your head, but to bridge the gap regardless of whether that's reality's fault or not. To go any further is to walk past the point of no return, to surrender autonomy entirely to the pure and untainted; creation insinuates it wasn't perfect on its own, and negotiates with that beneath it. With the strongest faith that beauty, life, and answers lie in the intangible, there are the few who **command** the full cosmic weight of their aspect. "Wait", you say, "This is still just a mundane human moral framework like the rest, but this sounds like these two classes are completely divorced from reality. How do they function in society?". Be quiet and listen - the show is about to begin.

A lot of people in the Homestuck community say that you shouldn't assume someone is a Lord or Muse cause they're the MASTER CLASSES, which makes them too special to assume. I don't see why. There's lots of Lords all over the fucking place (ESPECIALLY back in the punk house I used to live in), and you shouldn't be in a hurry to be like one. Caliborn was right on the money after all, and Muses have their own peaks and valleys.

LORDS are the most singularly intense, self-assured, and weirdly optimistic living creatures you will ever meet. Bold, brash, and with almost no censor, their raw enthusiasm for life is as contagious as it is contentious - "doubt" is a 5 letter word. Altruistic despite aggression, Lords are drawn to others; they size up their complaints and shortcomings quickly, then try to set them straight with no-nonsense life-advice. However, this desire to mentor only highlights that Lords are *utterly consumed* by their own not-so-little world; they always prioritize their experiences, anecdotes, politics, irritations and mildest opinions over...well, facts, and they're either unable or unwilling to reconcile this slurry of identity, memory, and worldview with anything outside it. If this sounds like a two-dimensional cartoon example of the word "egocentric", sure, but this **isn't (entirely) a bluff**; Lords universally utter insanities like "I have never lost at anything in my life" and "I know more than expert scientists", and either ignore or talk past any transparent evidence to the contrary. This self-

confidence leaves them strangled by personal failures they're unable to grasp, yet still capable of succeeding in half the Herculean labours they promise. They advertise themselves as poets with a grand vision, but breaking them to the point of self-awareness means someone matching their force of will - and if you aren't careful, you'll get caught in their orbit instead.

All the ones I've met keep slamming doors behind them. Like, they never look back to slow it, or dampen the impact. Is that relevant? There's also a general level of casual sexism or racism but it's not *quite* universal. I know this one media figure who's a big name on breadtube; his rudeness is unmistakable, even if he's got some good politics. I liked one of his speeches, to be fair. It's one of those rare reminders that a Lord's strength can be worth it...when controlled, and not in complete denial of reality.

As the most active of active classes, it might explain why their meaning of life is so...individual. They can only get this way because where Maids expand and stress-test the limits of their aspect, Lords cut all the brakes and smash through in every direction at once; they **command** their aspect, a true Inland Empire exporting the last word on the meaning of life. This does give them the iron will to push through situations that would even break a Maid, but a complete 1-1 synchronization between personal identity and universal meaning is incredibly dangerous. A Maid's fudged numbers and exceptions *become* the rule, with personal bias and the irritations of inconvenience subsumed into an all-consuming metanarrative with one palette and one interpreter. Not a micro-managing autocrat, but a static example of a perfect problem solver that the Lord either believes themselves to be currently, or will be - and that imagined future is concrete enough to draw strength from, even when everything else says otherwise. Generous but averse to dependency, affable despite a lack of accommodation, Lords endlessly produce assurances for the people around them despite having a blind spot in 10-and-a-half directions at once. They zero in on *only* the goals that excite them, taking their own improvised road there - which might be an easy shortcut, *or needlessly more difficult*. Scholarship is weighed equally to "a unique brain with great intuition", and the former is optional depending on the person. A Lord's aspect is what they do best; their favourite topic, their art, their science, their ultimate technique, the nature of our universe, the single direction of their boundless imagination, the reason why they're so great, the reason why they're always right, and what you don't have enough of...but, what they'll be happy to teach you, if you do everything they say.

Every Lord's got a story. A childhood so extreme you kinda get why they ended up the way they did, where the only way out was fierce independence and deciding their future. It doesn't ground them as much as they're liable to advertise it as. I've seen them change details a lot, and it shouldn't be carte blanche anyways. Hell, sometimes I think watching Lords is how I decided childhoods can't be excuses, for me or anyone else.

Here's the thing: we passed the Goldilocks zone of sustainable hype. Maids are stable so long as they keep their hands busy, but Lords need more fuel to keep the engine running - locked at eleven, no lower. As such, on top of being a workaholic (usually), Lords dip back into Page coping mechanisms: obsessing on the future, mythologizing their hardship, and looking for sympathy to their inadequacies and failed attempts. While these are often real sore spots, the Page dangers are a hundredfold worse; to omit all inglamorous details, to embellish their agency, to invoke it when they want something (attention, favours, sex), and to try and excuse indefensible acts. A Lord having a heart to heart is a massive red flag; even if they believe it, even if they want help, they're still frighteningly good at hooking and reeling people in with double-think manipulation. Even if it's not, trying to listen to the "depths of their soul" with an open mind only floods the mind with junk data and delusion that makes the rest sound *sane*. Lords are caught in a pyramid scheme run by their own ego, where reality is unfamiliar outside of it; the reason they bet money and their life on blind impulse, why "big breaks are right around the corner!", is because they're a *sucker*, and it's made them lonely. They're bound to an aspect and unbound to reality, drowning in fantasy without a Mage's modesty, a Page's caution, or a Maid's dignity to help them survive. Ironically, the only way to fulfill any of their impulses is to realize that they are fake impulses that must be leveraged accordingly; to have an open mind to the words of others, and accept some level of humility. Otherwise, they rot into a collection of excuses, empty promises, emptier threats, immaterial "connections", intangible talents, lovers who live out of town - all a facade around a simple bully. Even they might realize they're a sham, and that's more pitiable than anything else.

"I SWEAR BABE, I SEXTED HER AS A JOKE"

I should be more sympathetic. I'm a Page, Lords are only two notches off. I know what it is to be lost in the "you" that you want to be, to chase something stupid and wonderful when the whole world tells you no. I *know* it's stupid. Thing is, when you're stuck thinking it's stupid, you know you don't have to, and you definately know it's not fair to just be a massive crybaby about it. Between promises and childhood, nothing compares to who we are right now, and it's down to you and your therapist to stop making that everyone else's problem - to stop BEING everyone else's problem.

Good isn't something you are. It's something you do.

Prospit Lords want to be your best friend, and rarely notice if you ask them not to. Loud, large, and in charge, their lust for life often blinds them to reading the room, and they're generally caught off guard if people give them a hard "no". Seeing their aspect as purely heroic, they act with the knowledge that anything they come up with fits into that category. No matter how overconfident, their autopilot leans altruistic; they're here to help, they'll listen to your problems (kinda), and even if their solutions suck you can just nod along. They

often come off as harmless (if rude), but beyond hour long rants about their sexual conquest and this one dream they had, they're cannier than their charisma implies. Prospit Lords see and speak life through a hazy dreamworld, yet often are treacherous and opportunistic in action where their words aren't; the right hand doesn't know (or ask) what the left is up to. Lies are created hastily, and often defended with fire in their eyes; red in the face, making a scene, alternating between rage and sorrow, all for crimes they did 5 minutes ago and will do 5 minutes later as soon as you turn around. Yes, they *can* grow, mature, and hold themselves responsible, but there is literally no way to tell based on their reaction. Their charismatic confidence is *too* perfect, *too* genuine, and they're dangerously imaginative in storytelling. Don't get me wrong, they've got smiles of eternal reassurance that'll lift your soul up and make you think you can face the world...but be careful about following them. Sometimes they lead a charge into catastrophe on blind faith, and sometimes they throw people under the bus, proving they *knew* it was bullshit on some level. Maybe they're a Lord who's better, maybe they have standards, but trust that through witnesses and video cameras, not anything they say. Passion is no substitute for truth.

"Life is pain. Anyone who says different is selling something."

I have, sparingly, met a few Prospit Lords I trust. It's a delicate trust, one that I won't hold to if I hear a contradicting story from someone else I trust. I've seen some of them do incredible things. I want to say that's enough. But I've seen Prospit Lords deny domestic abuse, rape, shitting on top of a toilet, and steaing 200\$ from me and blaming a friend of mine. They were never good lies - that toilet one admitted it all dramatically to some girl he was close to, and thought no one else was listening at that hour - but they always dig in to try and make those lies work. They unnerve me, as human beings. There's alot (not all, thankfully) in fiction who are written as exactly the never-say-die always-smiling heroes they present as. In reality, of course, it's more complicated. Heroes don't look like that, and too many of the real Lords just want to pretend to be a hero because it gets them something.

Bravery is knowing you're scared and pushing through anyways; if you can't fathom failure, you're just being stupid. Honesty is telling the truth; If you know better and won't admit you had a hand in the cookie jar, blubbering like an infant while you think of a million excuses, you're just fucking pathetic.

Derse Lords want to be your worst friend, and don't care if you ask them not to. Their instincts push them to be insistant, impatient, straight up rude, and way too proud of all these things...*yet*, a Derse edge makes them far more lucid (perhaps even a sliver of shame) to the absurdity of their self-perception, and the things that come out of their mouth. This results in 3 possibilities: first, a Lord can "defuse", openly abandon world domination, and focus on casually shooting the shit with real friends (despite still having a short temper). Second, they're a bully; loudly bragging about criminal connections, martial prowess, Canadian girlfriends, and just not caring that all of it is bullshit. Third, they're a *successful* bully, where they'll deify their genuine accomplishments alongside bullshit to weave it into ridiculous

personal myths. These iterations are fluid, as the mix of intense willpower and volatile fixations keep them subject to change. Yet, consistent in all states is the desire to mentor people, which can feel (and be) an afterthought to friends who put up with their behavior. Of course, that "help" is weighed down by Derse Lords revelling in conscious manipulation (still capable of double-think, mind you), which is easy to miss next to someone so transparent in all their other malevolence. Getting people to be their idea of "strong" will often mean playing dirty, and that's either a fun secret or justified only as "irrelevant". There is potential here, sure - real passion, compassion, wit, bravery, pain - but a Lord who knows better is not necessarily a Lord who won't.

Caliborn is a devout believer that all that matters in life - ALL that matters - is looking at the big picture of everything, breathing it all in...and smashing your fist into it so hard that the crater will never go away, and the ripples will shake everything around it. He's violent, rude, more than a little misogynistic, and continually eggs on everyone around him to be at his level of aggressive chaos. Fighting and fucking is wrapped in a paper thin excuse of "art" and "zen", a cheap mockery of Spacebound's tenants that only pushes for more fire. He does WANT people to be around him, to listen, to stop being so useless...but he refuses to do it in a way that's not an ass, and his outright manipulations to get them "on course" give him a hundred options to get his way that don't involve changing who he is. Changing his ways is "weakness", and trying to change the world by breaking it into smithereens is nothing that cannot be healed, ignored, or forgotten by the masses he never truly understood as much as he thought he did. He's a Derse Lord of Time - and so is Johnny Silverhand in Cyberpunk 2077's depiction.

You really think the devs are fans of Homestuck or, more likely, every human being is a goddamn cliché and it doesn't take a genius to spot them? Hell, most of them just end up as Dermott Venture, and we ALL know someone like that. I knew more than a few growing up, and it should be enough to remind everyone that Master classes aren't rare, and they aren't something everyone should aspire to be - most aren't the rockstars they advertise themselves as, and even the superfamous aren't pretty up close.

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[accountability. fix weakness]

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MUSES are unassuming at first glance, and insist upon that impression despite what they volunteer for. Graceful and softspoken, they ask little and often shirk away from the limelight; yet, they have a lot to say, painting a coherent picture of morality that is all encompassing and accounts for all details. Many find themselves in awful situations, and endure insults or jeers that they seem strangely used to; in healthy environments with friends that care, they appreciate gestures but instinctively reject gifts. What matters to them is art, and many have what seems an unerring ability to pump out creative expressions. They might even be excited to show them off, but it's almost always followed by speeches of how "It's nothing" and "It

could be better". It doesn't matter how insistant you are: Muses *prefer* being nothing, because their closest friends are everything. They naturally idolize others with a potency that blots out their self-identity, and this genuine adoration gives Muses friends-bordering-on-followers they never seem to know what to do with...but if they *do* start getting ideas, they're very, very, very stubborn on them. Sure, they're wallflowers, but they're in the same weight class as Lords for a reason; they talk alot, believe their wildest claims, and motivate people forward without fully realizing they're deciding direction. Muses have (or imitate *really* well) a powerful intuition, knowing how to make all the chaos and lurid insanity of the universe make sense without ever lifting a finger.

Muses are the "most passive of passive classes", aiming the entire weight of their beings onto the lives of other people, and the greater scope of the world around them. This unflinching certainty resolves the frantic anxiety a Sylph has towards things being *almost* perfect, at the cost of smothering their self-worth (and self-preservation) into an almost unsalvagable oblivion. A Muse is inclined to believe their place in the world is as an insignificant witness, only serving so that other people (or any idea of "a higher power") can speak through their hollowed will; to **command** their aspect in others, as a beacon or conduit, meant to reflect greatness back at its source. Their wants and whims are under the tightest scrutiny to not interfere with the perfect harmony of this purpose; there is a contempt for their gripes and autonomy, if not their existence as a whole. Of course, these are the opinions they decided were personal, and all the compassion and self-sacrifice in the world doesn't change that they're on the same dangerous wavelength as Lords - subjective, anecdotal, absolute. Their narratives would imply they're the ones being commanded, but it's never out of the question for them to step up to plate and coordinate; even then, it's a supremely subtle endeavour, and they'll stay as isolated as possible until it's "done". Their aspect always manifests without their signature; the beauty they bear witness to, the way they'll deify friends and lovers, the party they organize but can't partake, the responsibility they can never profit from, our true fate, and what you have so much of - and they'll be happy to gush over, if you let them.

Always some turmoil, but the ones I know don't talk about it easy. Whatever made them hurt, and they're just doing their best to make it sound beautiful. It's all you can ask of any classpect, but it's so hard to get them to include themselves.

While their beliefs have a better track record for positive outcomes than Lords, it doesn't change the danger of someone not lucid to the seduction of their thoughts - everything can be filtered and rationalized as part of the greater whole, and their reclusive nature

only makes it harder to distinguish what they *accept* and what they're trying to *engineer*. Yes, they're often very depressed, prone to hurt themselves emotionally (or physically), likely to be taken advantage of, and are nearly impossible to pry from these paths...but they're far from harmless. Remember how Sylphs snap less often than Knights, but worse in degree while thinking it's in the name of everyone else? Muses are a *fucking hurricane* when they something finally riles up, and are completely blind to their sense of self when it happens - everything wrong is a cosmic transgression, inexcusable and indefensible. Yes, Muses worship people close to them, and will only show flickers of this intensity in disagreements, but they can be extremely cold and apathetic to those they cannot accommodate in their beliefs. While it's a decent defense against those they never wanted in their life in the first place, this near inability to negotiate or compromise does damage to their important relationships. Their emotional distance and secrecy often helps them preserve illusions and assumptions - a coping mechanism inherited from Knights, much the same way that Lords mimic Page strategies. Martyrs to people who repeatedly ask them not to be, but infinitely more uncompromising and unapologetic about that burden; How do you argue with someone who believes they have nothing to prove?

AltCalliope might be threatening, but she isn't off-script: both iterations are very much Muses, but only one started throwing their weight around. I've seen far worse in reality. I have to say religious Muses are the most difficult.

Prospit Muses are calm, content, and transparent about the grandiosity of their beliefs; they might be distant, but they'll be open about what they believe (or think they believe). Wearing their colours on their sleeve, they're held by a strong certainty of conviction that either leans sacchrine or melancholy. They're the most clearly articulated in the lines they draw between themselves and the rest of the world, and these high-minded principles makes them the *most* difficult to negotiate with on a personal level. It's harder than it looks to become close enough they'll champion you, and it's harder still if they've been hurt before and found more ways to rationalize seclusion. They process things alone, and they're not used to people fighting with them, let alone *for* them. Growing past this, becoming more social, learning to trust their happiness, all of these are worth encouraging...but it's still worth keeping an eye on them, even at this point. They are legitimately empathetic and open minded, but they're reflexivly stubborn when challenged on their assertions; frequently blindsided by missed details and bias, with a cold fury when the lines they don't realize they created are crossed. More than shy, they have an unparralled talent in intimidating others to not step out of line "for their best interest". They might even be proud of it, threatening others not to mess with them, but it's important to reach past their

barbs as much as their self-loathing - it's coming from the same place of martyrdom, and they truly don't have to let it define them.

They're a lot less scary when they don't have actual cosmic power like Calliope. But they still have a way with words. I know exactly who they are and what they're made of, and my blood still runs cold when they want to put the screws on.

...definitely more than a few anime characters here...

Derse Muses sing the same song, but they seem to think it (and themselves) are stupid. Uncertainty and skepticism only drive the Muse's poor self image even further downward, and leave them hesitant to speak the principles they assume no choice but to live by. The silver lining in constantly asking people if they're being a nuisance is that they're much easier to talk to, with their powerful optimism and hero-worship ready to be invoked when people need it...and the slightly-more-obvious stormcloud is that they're constantly asking people if they're being a nuisance. Derse Muses are woobies, often emotionally taxing at the times where they're not emotionally inspiring. They're also not *entirely* well-intentioned, and are liable to omit a few details or play a little dirty from time to time. Forgiveness will depend on the person, but an explanation exists in the rather depressing status quo they default to; idolizing others is not simply for it's own sake, and many hope that they can ride someone's coat tails and catch some happiness for themselves. This behavior can easily become overbearing, but it can also get them hooked by abusers who learn how to manipulate them. It's important Derse Muses learn to set boundaries, true...but, even if it's concerning to outsiders, sometimes you gotta step back if they actually found someone perfect (their definition, anyways) to adore and worship. It's just what they do, and anyone who truly reciprocates that degree of affection is a rare find.

I am pleased to be in the "best friends" category of a Derse Muse of Heart (I've repeatedly told her it's a bad idea). I know her well enough to say La Brava from My Hero Academia kinda' hits the nail on the head. I'm fond of her. Not everyone will be. But if you see any, keep an eye on them - I get it if they're causing trouble, but it's too easy for someone else to put them through worse.

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[wip. ironically im kind of lacking creativity on what to write. i mean, harp player, isolated, lonely, remembered by society, speaks of legends...something something]

INVERSION (FLIP IT TURN WAYS)

Our assigned classpect is not all we are...but not in a way that cannot be systemized with further classpects. People *change*, sure, but alot of the time we change into what's already been brimming under the

surface, baked into us since our minds first properly developed. It is our exceptions, our hypocrisies, the roles we run to when we're sick of ourselves, how we help others in ways we don't allow ourselves to be helped, the sides we ignore despite them going off anyways, the shape we take when we need to be *more*. Call it your masculine/feminine/other-kind-of-neither side, call it the persona shadow, call it personal demons, call it whatever you want, but there's a second side to every coin.

Every active has a separate language for accommodating others, every passive has a distinct voice of their own under the surface, and telling the difference helps us blend them into better combinations. Class inversions **invert the aspect as well**, meaning that we are fully capable of invoking and accepting that which disgusts us for too long of our lives. The terms we set, the lines we draw, the amount we allot, how much we even choose to admit, that is all personal - but at it's best, we are prepared for any situation, our needs and others, with either side of our personal axis to draw from and *hopefully* enough contentment to defer to those better suited. You want to untangle everything inside, find clear lines for who you are to yourself and who you are to the world? Here's everything you're working with - you decide where it goes, where you aim it, and how important it is to you. Your life is your story; the less control we exert, the more it belongs to the people around us, or the people that made us.

Despite many years of debate, Hussie (at least, someone on his behalf) has claimed that the long controversial "Inversion Theory" is debunked, and irrelevant to Homestuck.

I will argue that every character in Homestuck already follows inversion, and indeed classes would be completely unrecognizable if not for the twin impulses making up who they are, regardless of whether they realize it or not.

And even if that's not enough, every single goddamn human being in reality displays classpect inversion that it doesn't matter what we apply to Homestuck or not.

Personally, as a Page of Time, I think there's a certain thrill in **stealing choices** and new forms of personal creativity, in a way where we all benefit. So I'm gonna.

INVERSION CONT: QUICK GLOSSARY OF TERMS I MADE UP (I'VE GONE MAD WITH POWER)

Impulse: We have to recontextualize classpects as a whole, as it's impossible (or at least, unprecedented) to have one without it's mirror twin. Every single class described only has its habits *because* of the interplay; a passive class with pride, breaking points, and self-loathing is expressing their active side, as much as the ways active classes compromise (or don't) highlights their passive. This isn't a class "changing", it's just shifting the spotlight to which side is highlighted more, with no amount of conscious suppression or invocation changing that neither will ever truly go away. Therefore, there are two

impulses, and both want separate things at the same time, but not in a way where they can't both win. For simplicity, these will be referred to as a "[class] impulse"; i.e., Class X has an X impulse and a Y impulse, Class Y has a Y impulse and an X impulse, but this is universal and will never involve Z or B or whichever. Confusing the two impulses is, if nothing else, unfulfilling, so harmonizing them will be the consistently recommended endgoal.

{Primary/Main}{Secondary/Inverted}: While both impulses exist, classes aren't a pointless distinguishment: a Mage of Time and an Heir of Space will both want and think roughly the same things, but their first aspect is considered "good" (usually) and their inverted aspect is considered "untrustworthy/unfamiliar/evil" (usually). Learning to respect and utilize these talents is important, but doesn't change one's default state (and personal favourites).

To elaborate on what I mentioned at the start of the brochure, my SpaceWitch friend has proposed the idea that there's something to explore in an even fuller inversion - inverted intensity, so you swap 1-4 and 2-3. This loses the whole "two halves of the same mind" practical examination I'm focusing on, but there *might* be something to it beyond acknowledging the absolute polar opposites of a class. People get pent up or burnt out too easy, and that's kind of reflected when a class half-asses their inverse. I'll try to only mention it in passing, since it's speculation on top of speculation on top of speculation, all on the topic of real human lives with a lot to lose.

True [class]: As above, while the inverted impulse is a valid filter to thoughts and actions, and classes can learn (or will accidentally display without prior knowledge) attributes and attitudes of their inversion, it doesn't change their default. Our hypothetical Mage of Time and Heir of Space would definitely have a lot of things to talk about and common life experiences, but their priorities, focus, and habits only reinforce original classification - it's best to think of an inversion as an "honourary" or "substitute" class.

Mind you I am 100% down for ascended class names; I mean "Thief" and "Knight" fit together as "Mercenary" so good it's fucking maddening it's not canon! Even the coloured pajamas Homestuck uses would go GREAT with some contrasting palletes!

Misfire: When an inverted (or, on rare occasion, primary) impulse is either ignored or consciously suppressed, it still manifests in a way where an individual is still "verbing their aspect". Without the benefits of moderation or intent, this is often done in very unhealthy ways, especially compared to the utility of confronting and controlling it. **Do not try to "pick" which side of yourself is "correct" out of misplaced shame.** No arrangement of classes or aspects is evil; precarious, dangerous, volatile, absolutely, but never evil, never useless, and never without another side to balance it out.

The idiot that tries to only feed one wolf is the idiot who hasn't bothered to tame a feral wolf that even *they're* admitting they can't get rid of. It's a fucking wolf. Use it to pull sleds and eat people. No bad dogs, only bad owners.

...“Verbing the aspect” kinda sounds like innuendo, actually...

INVERSION CONT 2: ASPECT AKIMBO

(ATTUNE, ADAPT, ALCHEMIZE)

If we’re going to be discussing how classes smush together, it’s important to quickly preface how aspects fit as well. They’re only oil and water if one were to try and invoke either in the same way one does their primary, which is why it must be tackled on our own terms - a deeply personal thing, to redeem all we fear and turn our eyes from. While it’s unlikely something this abstract will appease everybody, it might be enough to help longstanding ennui straighten out.

Remember: control is choice with intent. We do too much without truly realizing, and accomplish too little because of it. Look for balance.

I’ll be honest, what’s coming is kind of sacchrine. Hopeful. Maybe edging on “telling you how to live your life” even more than I have already. Somehow, it feels more suspicious if it’s optimistic, you know? I dunno it’s just...this *is* the nice stuff. This is, too often, just the way people finally figure themselves out and feel at peace. Isn’t it kind of exciting to be able to, you know, systemize that?

This stuff helped me close the gap with stuff I’d been wrestling with for decades. It’s not like anything would’ve done it; an old internet quiz put together by a fan back in 2012ish gave me “Page of Space”. I knew I was a Page, I knew I had a creative streak, but even though I tried not to overthink it, I still felt like my impulsivity and impatience were interfering with it. I felt more like a failure than ever, like all my family’s violence and trauma had corrupted what was I was supposed to be. Even if I hadn’t read “Page of Space”, it’s not like anyone else had any good advice for who I was or what I should do - people have been telling me to slow down my entire life, always seeing what they want to see, or what never was.

The Extended Zodiac, getting back into Homestuck, it all...it didn’t give me any *new* words to articulate myself. It just gave me a pat on the back for everything already brewing, with the acknowledgment that I am still 2 notches off from Caliborn (and, at it’s core, I’m not doing much different). I’ve been doing my best to see how well this stuff helps others, and I’ve had some nice moments of helping them close the gap with their demons - or hearing their epiphanies, and being just a little salty I had it down in print for at least a year.

I’m not a nice person. But I am an optimistic one.

TIME AND SPACE: Frail Mortality, Entropy, Heat Death, Absurdity of Existence, Legacy, Delight in the Temporary, Oblivion, Blurred Lines, Lucid Autonomy

Always found it funny how often punk rock blends into Buddhism.

HEART AND MIND: Contradictive Priorities, Human Error, Weighing all Whims, Right-Brain Left-Brain, The Subjective Objective, Resonance, Needs of the Many

There is no logical way to live life, or logical dreams to chase. All goals - even ones as simple as "don't get arrested" or "breathe" - are subjective. Systemizing allows for optimal attainment of those goals, and maybe others too.

HOPE AND RAGE: Salvaging Defeat, Exhausting Possibilities, Testing Thresholds, Redefining the Impossible, The Merit of Delusion, Acceptance without Surrender

You can accept the world that is, even when you wish it was better. Even if that doesn't exist yet, or never will. Sometimes, you just accept your inability to accept it, and fight anyways. I'm not Rage or Hopebound, but I've probably taken the most notes here.

LIGHT AND VOID: Contradictive Conclusions, Unbiased Clarity, Integration of the Forgotten, Blind Eyes, Making Myths, Hyperbolic History, Delight in Artifice

Remember, we're not talking about what did or didn't happen, only where you go with it. What lessons are drawn, what lessons are forgotten, and both with intent. Arguably, it's an important basis for everything here - making our own stories.

BREATH AND BLOOD: Collective Direction, New Traditions, Found Family, Forgive without Forgetting, Nostalgia, Fleeting Connections, Defining Moments, Lucid Morality

No one stays in our life forever, and we can't always stay in theirs. Sometimes pain is all you have left. It all goes eventually. Everything heals.

LIFE AND DOOM: Processed Pain, Support Networks, Boundaries, Therapy, Accommodation, Reconciliation, Perfect Imperfections, Acceptance of the Unsalvageable

Like I said before, it's easy for an outsider to understand that someone's healing process might mean isolating and processing grief. It's the people on this axis who have the most talent in making that a thing of beauty, but only when it all clicks.

Now, how to fit that full picture inside the canvases we already discussed...

TIER 1: FATE AND FREE WILL (WELCOME TO THE BIG LEAGUES)

With all the high-strung high-stakes we've discussed, it's easy to diminish the importance of those most subtle and most humble. Hypothetically, this document could have been arranged to explain the most intense first and work backwards, or any combination, and it wouldn't change that Prophets and Magicians are extremes in their own right. They can draw strength from others or themselves, and do either so elegantly they have no incentive to try both; without ambition, potential is a hypothetical that jeopardizes more than entices. Sure, they have their sore spots and rough patches, dealing with it and not making it anyone else's problem...but you turn those

few weaknesses into strengths, you wind up with more than the sum of your parts.

As soon as you **know** your fate, you can **change** it.

MAGES AND HEIRS are the living, breathing, manifested form of that old "Serenity to accept the things I can't change, courage to change the things I can, wisdom to blah blah blah" quote. They're both steady, quiet about their own issues, and don't trust anyone to do anything without them - yet, both fear their other habits, to the point of defining themselves by the exclusion for as long as possible. The consistent throughline is someone sure of themselves while always being *twitchy* in regards to the outside world; Heirs commit to "fixing" everything, Mages shut themselves away, and these exaggerated self-perceptions hamstring *both* of their inevitable snaps into one another. Sure, fix everyone else's problems, but a docile presentation masks that Heirs are not always unable to fix their own issues - they may be *unwilling*, acknowledging that as infrequently as possible. For the intentionally alienated Mage, trying to become invested in other people's problems always threatens to disturb their existing conclusions - "subtle guidance" often misfires as "bare minimum of appeasement". Crisis and stress results in Heirs snapping into Mage isolation without a road back, or Mages snapping into action and making it worse from a precedent (or continuing) disinterest in negotiation or basic empathy. Neither sees alternatives: the personal prophet and the Chosen One have only ever seen one route for themselves, but there was always middle ground between saving or ignoring everyone around them.

Blood Mage and Light Mage - John knows friendship (and the mess of ancestry his dad goes on about), Equius knows his culture (and their ridiculous myths), and both put up a decent fight before...well, I guess it didn't really go great for either of them - especially if we're counting epilogues. Beyond that, Meulin's an awful Heir of Mind, but being awful at it only highlights she is one, at least partially. If we're trusting Hussie that all the dancestors were based on fanon misrepresentation, then people underplaying Sollux's preference for isolation explains alot...

My brother is, still, an Heir of Breath. He also claims to know our father more than most. I still dispute that, and think it's a somewhat pressing situation to address. I wonder if we'll ever see eye to eye.

To **know** yourself as something static and true, while trying to **change** the lives of those around you with a gentle touch is, all in all, a pretty great combination of traits...which makes it a tragedy that it's snapped in two like a wishbone. Mages and Heirs suffocate a side of themselves, and miss the nuance of their opposed aspect in the process - but not for lack of trying. A misfiring Heir impulse is *just enough* to get people to leave a Mage alone most days, and malleable enough to do whatever they need it to do on the days they feel like

getting involved - all essentially selfish. What's more interesting is that a True Heir's single-mindedness and sturdy resolve is almost entirely the result of being built of Mage components...but that's a monkey paw situation if there ever was one. Where a True Mage sees imperfections as part of the greater whole, an Heir's Mage impulse sees a world of imperfections they lack the language to accept...which only further explains why a Mage's Heir-ish involvements are so often unapologetic, on top of the previously discussed self-imposed hinderences. They're both really good at each other's job on the days they don't misread the instruction manual - yet, more than efficiency, they're denying half their available methods to just feel *okay* with the world.

See it was SpaceWitch talking about her brother (a Derse Heir, with both of them raised by a Derse Lord), drawing a conclusion between Heirs and Lords that made me send her my constructed MSPaint chart - and that's what got her so excited she designed the globe model. So then, the idea that Heirs and Lords are the truest opposite? There's merit. Those moments of individuality have such weight (and sometimes violence) where you can see a similarity of approach, the same way Lords underestimate the weight of their mentoring. I'd argue this is more of a pent-up misfire, but maybe there is something worth examining on their relationship...hell, John and Caliborn are the closest Homestuck has to a "true good guy" and "true bad guy". There's a narrative there if you want, no matter how you slice it; the true King with magic they doubt or downplay, and the rich tyrant with a musical magic seen as a dubious excuse.

As for Mages? Like I've said, they have a tendency to get pretty..."excited", sometimes, tripping into a social fervor they usually don't humor. I've seen it enough in real life that it makes Meulin's attitude worth keeping in mind...and, kind of funny, given the name I picked for that post-Bard class. We'll get there when we get there, but it's just nice how things work out sometimes.

If you wait long enough, an Heir will understand their Mage side - they just tend to forget how to be an Heir when they do. If you wait a lifetime, there is still no guarantee a Mage will change their strategies or not feel uncomfortable playing emotional anchor. These are, plainly put, unnecessary limitations placed upon oneself, strangled by comfortable tragedies over unfamiliar hope. Life's more complicated than being "everything to everyone" or "fine" forever, but acknowledging that makes it easier. You don't have to sacrifice or succumb to anything; an Heir is *less* of a hypocrite for taking some of their own advice every now and again, and a Mage's conclusions become sharper when field-tested. It's going to be hard to unlearn some habits, and harder still to challenge personal narratives, but that doesn't mean anything drastic or sudden - just have an open mind. Be there for other people, but take solace in your own soul when you know it's better to be patient. Be open with your conclusions, allow them to be challenged, and remember whatever calling you're feeling is something you wanted to do on some level. Rejecting it is an option, but that's an internal dialogue; your perception of the outside world and personal responsibilities shouldn't be confused with what's actually happening. You're always where you feel you have to be, but there's power in setting your own terms - we make our own fate.

Heirs are endearing little bundles of self-hatred, and I still hope I can help them finally give a seal of approval to their friends and themselves - to not run as soon as they're not needed, to not plant seeds of doubt so they always are. You can sit on that throne and be a King with the power of prophecy, even reform the monarchy to a democratic parliament...but just as many Heirs are gonna go find a different kingdom to save, or go back to the farmhouse they started in. Maybe more. Maybe all. Even with Mages, it's not like understanding an Heir impulse automatically makes them one; you could go with "Arch-Mage" or "Wizard" for some authority, but the door's open for things as simple as "Alchemist" or "Wanderer". There's a lot of potential new class names and interpretations, but it depends on the individual, and what they want to associate with their own life. I just have my own longings, watching them work magic and hating to see them go. If we can't *own* our classpects, if we can't *do it for us*, because we *choose* to...what's the point? All I can do is open doors, and try not to judge which are walked through.

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WITCHES AND SEERS border on complete indistinguishability from each other (barring Seers leaning too far into lecture without playful mirth to balance it). As it turns out, "doing a little for myself" and "neutrally observing the world" have such low upkeep it's easy to misunderstand as nonexistent, and neither class is going to be in a huge hurry to fight for the spotlight - or fight for anything, when they can wait, manipulate, or settle. They chase and present contentment, but they can't cheerfully stay two steps ahead of depression forever; they *can* minimize fallout exceptionally well, but let's start this discussion with the pretext that hiding your pain is a failstate. Other people are reliable to hold on to, and one can always drudge up some personal fixes, but this is something they likely already know and practice; helping them cope more efficiently is on the table, but arguing they're more important than they think they are feels more pressing. They both tend to dance around insecurities, and see presenting otherwise as a conscious falsehood...but this idea that somewhere, deep down, they're "no good" is an unconscious falsehood. Even if you fit both pieces together, they might still see themselves as broken with no way to smooth out those edges, but you know what? Good. Maybe being prickly is form and not fragmentation; helps you catch the light better to shine, and helps stab a few people who have it coming too.

Finally, my kink for manipulative-yet-self-deprecating damaged women pays off. What? We going to pretend for a second that Terezi and Rose don't match to "Witch of Heart" and "Witch of Void" flawlessly? It's easy as soon as you realize you were allowed to look for it, just as much as Feferi and Jade make compelling Seers of Doom and Time respectively. I've known WAY too many in real life to not have this scent down like a bloodhound, and I hope I can make a compelling enough case that you see it too.

And let's not pretend Kankri didn't have sass.

To **change** what concerns you, and to **know** the world around you; the interplay is obvious, but the result is still a perception of being untethered, if not outright "lesser". An unknowable loose element in a sea of quantifiable figures - static, understandable, organized,

attuned. Seers often plunge head first, but Witches tread water in interesting ways. A misfiring Seer impulse will manifest in dependencies to louder voices, sure, but it also results in mistrusting their own praise and understandings; Witches can make beautiful speeches towards the great impartiality of the universe that comfort and enlighten, but they were rarely *trying* to. This leads to downplaying whatever they said in the past despite its lingering good, and rarely speaking up if they consciously recognize the stakes - call it stagefright, call it unworthiness, it's still unnecessary. For Seers, a misfiring Witch impulse is usually for screwing with people, and the precise way that they're able to influence them into favourable (or just interesting) positions. While this can be altruistic (despite firm, even exclusive, control), it is a misfire by virtue of how *horribly* Seers practice self-care. True Witches may also not solve longstanding problems or accept outside help, but they do cope more efficiently - as previously mentioned, Seers are really good at hiding the fact they're running their life off a cliff from the people who would object to that. They're outsiders who try to stay outsiders, accomplishing little more than the Witches who feel like outsiders no matter where they go.

The pain is slight, but consistent - familiarity lulls one into a false sense of security. Self-loathing to smile through, at the risk of tainting the idea of smiles - or you tough it out, and set your terms for who you've got a problem with. A passive impulse to be someone's side character, an active impulse to live a separate story; Seers treat their place in the world as utility, where Witches treat moments of splendor they have no instinct to explain to anyone as some justification they shouldn't reach further, too easily rationalized as unnecessary distraction. Both aspects end up underplayed, but are we to assume low upkeep means low quality? Fuck that - a few bad spots and stutters don't change either class being unforgettable, with sharp wits that can be forgiven for misjudging their own self-worth. A framework of the world is always fuzzy, but Witches turn their eyes from it where Seers try to see a whole that never comes into focus - it's *supposed* to be fuzzy, so those twitchy hands can get experimenting. If you're worried about hurting people, don't; if you think you're insignificant, know better; if you've got something you find beautiful, share it, because it doesn't change that it always belonged to you. Don't ever feel like you don't belong just because you're lucid; the world is yours to upset or improve, paired with enough explanation to guide your hands and enthrall those involved. You're exactly who you're supposed to be, and you know exactly where you want to be - so do it, cause you never needed me or anyone else to tell you.

Sorceress/Sorcerer? Warlock? Shaman? Mystic. Arcanist? Do we endorse Kankri and just say Messiah? Oh, whatever, they'll come up with something themselves.

TIER 2: BONDS AND LIBERATION

(SET YOUR LIMITS, THEN CROSS THEM)

Needless suffering is not hidden in regards to the class pairs discussed here; struggling to follow or break every rule is, in fact, emotionally and physically draining. Whether Servant or Outlaw, there is a self perception of being expendable pawns or off the board, not here for accolades or authority. Of course we are in control of our own brain delusions, and it's important to take ownership of that, but it does mean that finding themselves isn't going to *abandon* their complexes. There's limitations in sticking to procedure, just as many in subverting it, and every class here *knows* that by virtue of constantly waxing wistful for a life they've artificially deemed off limits.

Exploit only the rules that can be justified, and **steal** everything else.

PAGES AND ROGUES are an (initially) unsustainable union of impossible personal standards and fragile alternatives that barely belong to them. Both sides tend to cancel themselves out if one is favoured without the other, and they spiral out of control on the rare occasions they don't. A Page impulse is basically non-functional out of the box, and can only be entertained in fantasy and harmless pretend; for True Pages, this is the starting point while trying to attain practical application, while Rogues have their aforementioned difficulty ascertaining their sense of self due to atrophy. Without confidence, Rogues too easily fall into their also-aformentioned mess of excuses and depersonalization...which is the *exact same rut* Pages perform in complete depressive despondancy. It's even worse since the inverted aspect is a failure state, with Pages retreating to the corrosion of their doubts and failures, guilty for reprieve to the expectations hanging over their head - and what does that say about Rogues? To have the "impossible standard of who you're supposed to be" read as a threat? They're an outlaw running from themselves, trying to save others from the pressure *they* put themselves under, while broken Pages too often end up indistinguishable diet-Rogues from the same ordeal. The odds are against them, but the sides they fear are the tools to dig themselves out and make it all sing.

Pages are not a passive class. I do, however, get why you might think that.

You're just wrong.

Rufioh being the manifestation of misrepresentation surrounding Tavros is as clear as day. Even if we neglect Hussie's word, his writing sticks: Tavros fears letting loose, while casually able to negotiate the bonds of others, and freely gifting his suffering to people who don't deserve it. Rufioh, meanwhile, *seems to have trouble with commitment*, and his much more defined excuses are to remedy that. His little bunch of lost boys

staying together are a Page of Blood half-manifesting, but only ever half, where Tavros's grand calls to action are always about going forward. I also shouldn't need to explain how Nepeta may resemble the diligence and conviction of a Page of Mind, or how Jake and Xefros both reflect the approaches of trying to balance Hope and Rage from different sides.

It should also be pretty friggin' obvious how interested **I** am in negotiating and reinventing the creative expressions of everyone around me - which is to say, you, reading this. It's not unbecoming of a Page of Time, it's almost *inevitable*. I'm fine with that.

Exploit an aspect into the best it can be, and **steal** another outside its borders - take a step back, and it's almost *too* simple how these two fit together. The passive impulse allows Pages to meet people halfway with negotiations and appeasement for their craziest ideas, where the active impulse gives Rogues a method and backbone to their most divisive disagreements or bohemian desires, and either class can alternate as it suits them...at an end point, anyways. Pages are beaten and broken by their primary impulse, and misread their second impulse as "cheating" - *guilty* pleasures, *undeserved* breaks, *incorrect* shortcuts. Let's be clear that this isn't a misfire; Page beliefs do not work out the gate, never will, and they're allowed to rest and compromise. More than that, one of their most quintessential characteristics (and the reason they're a black sheep between Mages and Maids) is a Rogue touch: **stealing solutions** by absorbing quotes, morals, gimmicks, and everything else from the world around them. Pages reinforce their personal identity out of what they can do for people around them, but the misfire is in meeting people halfway while only ever dragging them to their side - to manipulate and subvert with the inverse, but only accepting totality. Still, if you let everyone else have their way every time, then too many voices corrupt and dismantle certainties, and violate one's self worth. Rogues have the same problem, without often realizing they *had* personal certainties in the first place. Restructuring their primary passive aspect into whatever people want doesn't need a Page worldview...but it does *help* when they want to stand up to someone, and stick to their promises. Rogues always put pressure on themselves, but it's not for the reasons they think - they, too, are built not to serve *people*, but their *gut*. Unreasonable as it might be, it's still theirs; more than demonizing their opposed aspect, they can do it correctly.

My family was too much yelling, too much noise, too much pressure. Someone should've done something. Maybe, if I wasn't so self-obsessed or guillable, I would've been a Rogue, instead of spending so much of my life blaming myself for not being strong enough, and hurting people around me in some misplaced sense of merit. Competition and confrontation has value, but not for the sake of itself; exploiting it (or anything) isn't about doing it *better*, it's about doing it *right*.

What matters is that it's not too late now. It isn't for any of us. We can't let our preconceptions of "what is" cloud the **choices** available to us now, and stop us from making the most of the **time** we still have.

They both *want* to help people, but it is in questioning themselves that the other side never makes it too far; ignored obligations, ignored alternatives, two impulses that blame the other fighting for the position of superego, and the worst deeds done when both are ignored. Pages and Rogues have their sense of self bound to selflessness, their identity tied to toil, their happiness defined by everyone else's; the objective to overpower or subvert all hardships they possibly can, and comfort those hurt by what they couldn't. Neither side on their own has enough heft to truly silence their doubts, to carry them through all fights, but there's a silver lining there: when you hit your limits, swap to the other. To build as much of one's utopia as is possible, to redefine all it can't reach, indulgence and diligence balanced contextually for every moment, failure is a part of life, and the work is its own reward - your aspects don't cancel themselves out if you *fucking dual wield them*. The imbalance is in forgiving everyone else while refusing to forgive yourself - or carrying everyone to the finish line, when some people need to be told they failed, and that there are consequences for that. Don't try to meet someone halfway when it's obvious they aren't bothering to try, or just want to see how far they can push you. Be kind to yourself, don't let yourself be taken advantage of: you're not lesser, you're not a failure, you're not a lapdog, you're not a stressball. The fact you can function without needing to prove that to everyone is just a reminder you only ever needed to prove it to yourself. Go be the hero; the one the Page always wanted to be, the one the Rogue wished would show up, and the one they both always were.

You know, I've had too many people try to decide who I should be - which is ironic given everything I'm doing here. I really am trying to meet people halfway, inbetween highlighting bad habits and pits (dunking on Bards is probably the most needless violence but still). It's just...my family especially, they always give me weird looks. Maybe they think the aspie wasn't going to notice, but it's all I'm looking for; I got some high minded ideas of where I want to go, and everyone keeps chiming in. Settle, don't settle, assert myself more...I dunno. Maybe my brain locked on to this Page/Rogue dynamic just because I felt I had to meet them all simultaneously, but there's a rule to Pages: we only learn the lessons we want to learn. We pick who we emulate, and we awkwardly try to argue our way around the things that repel us. It's hard. We can't tell the difference between reprieve and a rut most days. But we still have to try. It's a part of us, the same way our fragile compromises with others are ourselves to. There's a reason I've made this document so personal despite ostensibly being a public resource, and it's for more than whim, limitations of my language, or the merit of anecdotes

I don't know about everyone, but rather than get weighed down by nobility, I like the individualism of "adventurer" or "explorer". "Champion" if I'm feeling presumptuous - and I'll decide for myself if it is or not.

I swear Tavros is the only one who actually made it.

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THIEVES AND KNIGHTS have diametrically opposed self-perceptions, to the point of making the comparison *more* obvious.

Thieves are always trying to prove themselves against the establishment (that they project), and Knights are always trying to enforce a system that never benefits (or includes) themselves. Both are *terrified* of submitting to the other impulse, both *inevitably* will at various points of their lives, and they seem to think that there's no going back once they do. These impulses result in the same worldview no matter what's at the forefront at any given time: they're an immutably bad person, they do evil because of that, they do good to make up for that, nothing ever fills the hole inside, nothing about their relationship to the world can be changed, Prospits try to settle with it, Dersites laugh about it, pain begets pain. Look, if you think your entire life, for decades spent and decades to come, boils down to "suppress all emotion and be human footstool" or "hurt everyone and everything around me in wild aggression", then you're *fucked* both ways because **the other voice never goes away, and wasn't the problem in the first place**. No one is making you do anything, and this mythmaking surrounding a need for penance and a need for protest only strangles one's ability to parse reality. They are the Scorpion and the Frog both - which is to say they are neither, and pretending otherwise is what keeps eating them alive.

Hey, remember when Vriska burnt out and had depressed consolation flirts with Meenah who was also rather burnt out? Great. Good talk. Place that mentally next to Dave Strider's mental breakdown, and Karkat's for flavour. We all on the same page?

Steal an aspect to rewrite it in your favour, while **exploiting** another for those around you - it's not an easy fit. Knights and Thieves may have their hard snaps when they're utterly sick of themselves, but their twin impulses manifest and misfire constantly no matter what they do. Redoubling the earlier discussed dynamic with Witches/Seers, seeing others as "more stable/cohesive", it makes sense why Thieves latch on others as readily as they're threatened by them; their personal worth is easily substituted by connection, both in more explicitly Knight-y brotherhood and threadbare (yet possessive) connections to famous or fictional figures. Course, if they're putting all their eggs in their primary aspect, then the opposed one only manifests as **exploiting** a negative in others: the same reflex Knights have to put people on a pedestal is misfired to shove them into the ground, *and* to reinforce bonds so they won't leave. To keep any company whatsoever, Thieves make themselves useful in a way that must be unique, and Knights are no different: their opposed aspect is often something **stolen** for exclusive control, as a talent they've "got covered" so you don't have to. Knights fret constantly about personal delights, but they already *do* that by rewriting it as one more "responsibility" they're incredibly defensive to give up. These are some wild mental gymnastics around a pretty basic mechanism: help your friends in a specific way, and do whatever you want if you

shouldn't or don't want to. All this "I am garbage" or "I have to fight everyone who believes I'm garbage" thought is, fundamentally, optional. All classpect beliefs are fake, but these two really are making things needlessly difficult for themselves - and *even this process of self-hatred* is too easily defended as part of the personal identity they'll fight for.

Karkat's raw thirst for leadership (and John) isn't a distraction, it's a function. In the same way, Dave's webcomic (and organized self-hatred) reflect a very unique approach to the Space aspect; he's not rejecting creativity and choice, he's making his own. In regards to his "I'm not a hero" speech, it's a free-flowing creativity he's using to martyr himself with, and that is...so, so tragically true to life.

I miss them. I don't think I should. Not after what was said, and did, and never apologized for while they tried apologizing for unrelated shit that only highlighted how utterly and hypocritically self-absorbed they were. Just lost in their own little tragedies, stabbing you whenever you try to pull them out, stabbing themselves at other times while thinking that's how you make friends - or god forbid, flirt. They come from similar childhoods best I can figure, but it's the ones who tried to rationalize their abuse that take the bulk of it with them.

Somehow, it's the Thief in my life who wound up the most well-adjusted, and remains one of my closer friends - and they're lightbound, the filthy Vriska-kin.

Thieves care about their friends, and balancing that with their hell-raising is uneasy; they'll burn out, and reigniting that raw passion to face the world and chase their dreams is tricky. The more Knights rely on their immutable worldview, the more fragile it will become to a world that does not give a shit; when it shatters, they crash and burn into a faux-Thiefhood of ugly spite where they try to make everyone hate them as much as they hate themselves. Somewhere, between these two impulses, and inside the individuals that live with them, is the moderation to balance them out - to not pick either narrative of the sinner or slave, but dissolve them to their base elements and alchemize anew. The fact is, Knights are allowed a break - they're also allowed to be annoying, unhelpful, selfish, and probably *should* without trying to "make it useful" or "stuff it down". Thieves don't need to pretend to be any worse than they are; they're wounded, they know that, but romanticizing it doesn't heal it and neither does hurting friends. You're not an everlasting protector of the innocent or a remorseless killer; you can bluff it, get shit done, but you have to know it's fake first and foremost. Contemplate who you are past your best *and* worst qualities - what you actually want, who you've actually got a problem with, and what you really want to be remembered for. Maybe it's best to take a break from defining yourself as a Thief or Knight...at least, not until you've decided what you want to define it - and yourself - as.

Like I said, "Mercenary" is a fun combo, but...yeah. There's human lives in the mix - and pretty volatile ones. Feels like pre-retcon Vriska is the only one who really figured it out...but maybe I should show more sympathy to Dave. Always rubbed me the wrong way how he pretty much "retired" timehood. It works for him, but...hell, there's plenty of issues with Homestuck's later writing.

TIER 3: MIRACLES AND SCIENCE (THE GRAY BETWEEN GIVING IN AND GIVING UP)

Aspects are beliefs, and most of those are synonymous with “things that make us happy”. The Royals touch of destruction should ideally temper, the Fae most of all, but the difficulties are well documented.

Despite this defined skepticism, they’re not actually as practical as they think (which is probably pretty obvious to the people around them). The damaged scraps of their main aspect only highlight what fills the null space; an inverted aspect they believe in *too* much, and an inverted class that keeps them ready for action (if not, strictly speaking, stable). Princes don’t have to be misreable and Bards don’t have to be...Bards, but it means walking back on everything (or at least half) they think they are. It’s equally unfamiliar for the Fae, but they really do have more in common than they think, and there’s possibility past the insult.

All is equal; nothing can be **created** without being **destroyed**, and vice versa.

MAIDS AND BARDS are, somehow, staggeringly, the same class. Now, the attitudes, behaviors, and romanticized self-perception are almost incompatible, but it’s hard not to see how they plant themselves in the same societal position: high on belief, argumentative, always doing their own things, never slowed down by a brick wall, and friends just have to accept how rarely they’ll get through to them. While Maids are easier to respect and lean on, let’s not measure them entirely by productivity; every one of a Maid’s weaknesses can be mended by employing Bard traits. Slowing down and getting away from their primary aspect are both very difficult tasks, and if the only way for any of that to happen is aimless heckling, we have to play the cards we’re dealt. This also means that Bards are doubly at fault for doing nothing, but we can at least finally answer why they *think* they’re super consistent problem solvers.

Gamzee being a Maid of Hope really tracks, even at his most wrathful moments; Destroyers overall better display their inverted aspect, like I’ve been saying. For Maids, I have the benefit of knowing one (for sure, anyways, but I do have guesses on an aunt of mine). Maid of Light, but you bet your ass she has some *weird* guesses sometimes. Sometimes that’s making narratives where there are none, and sometimes it’s openly fucking around with the unknown without any pretenses - and that, there, is the Bard touch. You want anything more, go watch Peridot’s arc from Steven Universe (my money’s on Mind/Heart).

Creating instances of your aspect is hard to do without **destroying** the other one other people hold up, using the Maid impulse as a monster truck engine and the Bard impulse as a battering ram. Now

obviously this is a pretty friggin' well oiled machine for Maids, but we're defining misfire by needless failure states and fighting a perfectly good aspect...which Maids do *alot*. Again, Maids do have a vague outline of what the world is outside their obligations, and who they could be outside of it, but it's not so much slowing down so much as charging full speed in the opposite direction; a Bard's touch in confusion, questions, juggling and discarding what they're having so much trouble trying to grasp. It's fascinating to tear into something and find it's true essence, but it's simpler to just **destroy** it indiscriminately - and whether they admit it or not, Bards don't do much different. Again, it's pretty rare they step up to plate and truly invoke their primary aspect, rather than cheerfully disregard anything not up to their standard. A misfiring Maid impulse really shows the worst side of it: pulling excuses and reassurances out of your ass, in a way that only benefits you. Without the necessity of putting their self-worth in it, Bards **create** their own echo chamber, too easily shielding them from criticism and accountability...and maybe, if we don't show respect and sympathy to the toil of Maids, we can acknowledge they often wind up doing the same thing.

Bard of Mind, one of my oldest friends, always goes "but do you know the REAL me, beyond the LAYERS" kind of talk whenever I try to press him, especially on classpects. I mean he sure as hell was "Unwavering", but hey! Extended Zodiac to Capricorn, Prosprit, and *Heart*, and you get "Multifacted". God it's like fucking poetry.

You know, Bards are the double-inverse of a Page. Maybe that's why I'm so irked by them.

Maids do alot of good, but their refusal to slow down can send them careening into dangerous roads, both for themselves and others. Bards can theoretically do alot of good, but they'd do alot more if they hit the gas. The Bard impulse only reaps rewards infrequently for either class - yet even without a profit, it's still important for Maids to invoke it for their own mental health. There is a balance between aggressively doing everything and aggressively doing nothing, but neither class is likely to find it unless something truly breaks their stride; no matter what endless reserves they can pull personally, it doesn't *help* anyone if they don't *listen* to anyone. Independence and self-sufficiency is a great attribute, but solipsism is dangerous in a way that's too easily seductive. Even if the differing approaches to the aspects don't line up equally, it's still important to mix and reconcile them as much as possible; the Bard impulse is *designed* to blend and integrate the ideas of others, not just fry them into cinders while obviously not giving a shit what anyone says. Aspects are imaginary, and their benefits to others must be cultivated and debated - so debate. Rev the engine, tear up everything around you, but don't salt the earth when you can see what can be grown anew in it's wake. It's easy to listen to yourself, but it's sure as shit more exciting to listen to others and seeing what you can come up with together - and besides,

neither class here is at risk of being lost in the tide. Maids can justify their positions without justifying their existence, Bards can push boundries without pushing patience, and both are capable of so much more than their most comfortable routines.

I'm not sure what kind of title you could use specifically, but there's certainly an allure to "Trickster spirit meddling with mortals", and the inhuman arcane nature of clowns. Maybe just "Trickster"? I know it's a loaded term in Homestuck's lexicon, but we can afford a few deviations. Ugh, pick whatever name you want - and that goes for friends of Maids and Bards moreso, since they're more likely to read this.

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PRINCES AND SYLPHS actually make significantly more sense than the previously discussed link, both initially and in depth. Poor with boundries, very defensive, weird assumption of being "in charge" of everyone else, needlessly competitive and petty, most critical in areas they're nervous to risk attempting, tendency to track people down days after an argument to get the last word in...it's pretty much the exact same laundry list of bad habits. Sure, their attitudes and focus are in different areas, but the fragile idealism and fragile cynicism aren't as different as they think (the keyword is fragile). It's hard to be everyone's best friend when you overthink it as "a job", and worse when that "job" is the only distraction from a volitile ennui at who the hell you're supposed to be and where you fit into the world. Sylphs at least have a "functional" default, where their active side can be ignored as much as possible and misfires can be minimized...but Princes are who they are, warts and all, precisely for having all that darkness at the forefront. In fact, Princes invert regularly over the course of their lives, often invoking their opposed aspect more than their primary one, struggling to make *either* work. There's a lot to get into here, and its for people who take alot of pride is having their shit sorted all by themselves without any help...but if it can be knocked over by anything, is it worth protecting? You want to help everyone, but you don't know how to help yourself, and it's scary when it feels like someone is trying to take control of your last scrap of self. I can't tell you how to live (even if I want to), I can just tell you that you have options - far more than you know.

Eridan and Dirk having a Rage or Mind side should be no surprise given their words and actions. Aranea's relationship with irrelevancy is under her strict jurisdiction; when new information threatened it, she could no longer allow it. Much the same with Kanaya, who, besides some paticular ideas of "what's gotta happen", rather famously defied death as a vampire. It's Aradia who gave herself more time in the hourglass, more of a rush of being alive - it's Kanaya who broke the hourglass, rejecting its sanctity and meaning.

The less I say about my mother the better. I will say, at least, that Sylphs and Princes are the loudest theists or atheists. The absolute loudest.

To "**destroy** an aspect" is a phrase that makes sense, but still misses the subtleties; you're stuck attacking it because it isn't what you want it to be, and you can't truly annihilate it either. You *want* to chisel it

into something great, but perfectionism too easily smashes it to rubble...it just doesn't actually kill it. So what then of **creating** the opposed one, in a passive way meant for everyone? A responsibility, altruistic and unquestioned? See this is easy to understand with Sylphs: **create** a road for everyone else, while showing a personal **destructive** disgust at what stands in its way. Their pride is in the sadistic stranglehold, but they rarely consciously realize that the wreckage left over is *precisely* organized the way they want it to be. It's why it's dangerous when they get "uppity", asserting more authority when an impulse to find problems ends up making them. On the other hand, Princes are playing a truly miserable game of telephone trying to interpret these impulses: their "responsibility to others" is...the strangled scraps of their primary aspect? Is the corruption and dysfunction they see in others a **creation** of naturally plotting a course for everyone else, trying to intervene to an invented evil? If they pull the "happiness is impossible, we must all accept the failure and helplessness that surrounds us" speech, is that just them barely starting to see good in their opposed aspect, but projecting it as universal? Why is even self-destruction meant to be some "way it has to be"? It feels like every Prince reinvention is just a reshuffling of win-states and fail-states, where every misfire is recognized enough to scare them into doing something reckless...but no matter how many times they reshuffle, it's the same fucking deck. They need to stop thinking no one can understand what they're going through, or that all that self-loathing is the core of their identity rather than the very predictable result of utterly failing to grasp it.

They're not monsters. But they'd prefer that, over being called a cliché. I don't know how they expect to move past that, if they won't recognize the problems they can't romanticize. It gets gross. They're not some tragic byronic hero, they're just half nurturing caretaker and half easily dissatisfied. At least Sylphs accept the first one.

I keep thinking about the whole "I raised myself" Prince childhood. Cause again, Sylphs are...fuzzy, on details. It'd check out, but we're not even measuring trauma so much as a child's rationalizations to it. Would Kanaya have been an outright Prince of Time with a Y chromosome (or whatever troll equivalent)? Is the pressure of serving her caste and being unable to do anything about it something quintessential to her becoming a Sylph of Space?

It's not *new* for Princes to wield their opposed aspect, but it's too often manipulative; bait, lies, invented evils, invented shelter, whatever accomplishes the task of making people rely on them and submit to their cataclysmic worldview. It's completely foreign for Sylphs to acknowledge their opposed aspect as something to build up, as something unifying instead of justifying their control. If you juice up both impulses and set them loose, you only wind up with a maniacal narcissist, obsessed with proving their accomplishments while frantically lashing out at anyone who doesn't provide the validation they need to avoid feeling insignificant. The Prince impulse is a dangerous liability, but it has far more utility than needlessly

chasing moral oblivion and settling for abusive hypocrisy - it was *never* about what is destroyed, or what is used to destroy, but what is spared. The undeniable truths, the beauty beneath the rot, the thing that never needed “fixing” in the first place. You try to tie that into becoming overly involved with everyone else’s lives, and they only exasperate the issues, while you try to prove that your “individual special opinions” are the “objective correct way to living”. Here’s a fun tip: good and evil aren’t real, we made them up. There is no correct way to live, but there is functional. You can sustain healthy relationships without either of you being dependent. You’re not allowed to *decide* you didn’t hurt someone; some people are unreasonable, but if that’s 99% of the people you meet **that is a red flag and you should reconsider why “you” are the only “sane” person you know.** If being yourself is so difficult, then don’t be afraid to be there for other people wholesale: give up some control, show trust, cause maybe the world will keep spinning regardless of you trying to push it or slow it down. Maybe that’s okay.

Foreign fairy representative and Princes both fit well into the “could totally pull a coup”. Originally I had fancy poetry speeches for here too, but I thought against it. Still...Princes tapping into fairy magic, louder and dangerous in a way that competes with the controlled cantrips of Heirs; there’s something to that, some resolution of the implied “arc” of the royal scientist trying to burn away the magical world out of fear. Just as well, give Sylphs cannons and militias, see if we can trust them, right? Maybe? Inversion is healthy, but it’s not an obligation, I suppose. Besides, even if we ignore what will or won’t go over well, it’s just plain easier to say what can’t work compared to what might. There’s a lesson there, I’m sure, but I’m no Prince. I exploit destruction, and maybe my frustrated obsession is in trying to exploit the destroyers - there’s always so much good buried there, but they’d all rather spiral.

The less I go into who’s hurt me, the better, probably. If there are any Princes...just find a way forward. Not by burning the past, but by learning from it. It’s work. You’re going to fuck up and relapse. The trick isn’t making sure it doesn’t happen, the trick is being okay with getting back up.

TIER 4: HEAVEN AND EARTH (THE HARDEST BRIDGE TO BUILD)

No, you aren’t forgetting anything, don’t scroll back to check. Information was omitted, and will continue to be until we have addressed all prerequisite information. Where Tier 3 showed the imbalances present in high intensity inversion, this is a step beyond. If you aren’t looking at it right, you might assume there’s nothing to weigh or compete at all. If the Void aspect has taught us anything however, it’s that “nothing” can have a lot more influence than we notice.

Command untarnished and unquestioned purity, and **transform** the rest as a plating.

A consistency among see-saw models is the idea that Lords and Muses balance themselves out. As a paired class, yes - as an inversion, no. It’s a damn shame Hussie didn’t talk

about any other classes (explicitly), but 14 doesn't really balance out evenly, does it? Odd numbered 7, no room for pairs, it should make you suspicious. Admittidly, I missed it. I just kept asking questions, and finally found someone that violated my assumptions while making everything else snap into place. Jesus I was in an insomniac fugue state for like 4 days writing that all down...anyways, we'll get to it. Despite being an information-focused document, a bit of narrative suspense helps build a more usable image, I believe.

LORDS AND...well, what would you call it? A Lord's passive side? It's *there*, they obviously have some pretty friggin' strong opinions on other people and the world, but it's hard to pin down the method. When we say **command**, we're talking about belief; remember, Lords are crazier than Maids, and their ability to rationalize openly selfish action doesn't change that they actually *believe* they have completely invincible moral superiority. They are the perfect problem solver (apparently), the exemplar of all that is excellent (apparently), so what is this antagonism to the world around them? It's not a Bard impulse; they disagree with others, but they arrive at their destination too quickly, where even Maids show the disorganized signature of the Court Jester. As fickle and thin as a Bard's beliefs are, they are *there* - a highly adaptive aspect, highly opinionated, that will eventually make *some* concrete conclusion on what "is". Under the veil of skepticism is an approximation of altruism, some fragment of the true belief. Lords have basically no respect for their opposed aspect, but they *do* talk about it. The most intense passive adaptation is to **transform** the world into whatever you want it to be, with no respect to a higher power or the sanctity of what is. It *can* be altruistic but it lacks accountability, strangled of its spark, and always secondary to a very large ego in True Lords. Maids use their Bard impulse as a battering ram despite its other uses, but it's harder to imagine the utility of this one - especially as a primary.

Caliborn. Space aspect. Creativity. Come on, it works for Johnny Silverhand too, that man understood zen and meditation only as it pertained to violent punk rock rebellion, didn't he? Yes it was a cheap excuse to hook followers and cause chaos, but there is a dynamic, and I've known enough real life Lords to say there's truth to it. We always know what we fight against, don't we?

MUSES...don't seem to make much time for themselves, do they? Their mouth is for your voice, their soul is hollowed to make room for yours, etc etc. They build a frightening amount of their identity on who's in their life, bordering on (and sometimes very much being) obsession. They are not prone to voice or condone what they get out of it...but, you know, they're human beings. There is an interplay here, and there are *wants*; this is most obvious with Derse Muses, who voice delights and pride infrequently but identifiably. A Prince impulse in a Sylph is diminished, but never dead; much like the associated aspect, the sense of self cannot ever be completely **destroyed**, and thus the struggle rages eternal. Muses seem to have

lost that fight and been snuffed out...or did they? There is an idea of who "they" are, but it's malleable and fluid to fit where everyone else is, and what the universe wants: to **transform**, in totality, who they are, and what they believe in. The interplay is, very often, to be what other people want - but it doesn't have to be, and there are limits to how far they can be pushed around. They have needs, autonomy, *opinions*. You're allowed to have opinions, but its dangerous if they're always masked as belonging to others, just the same as Lords overwrite other wills with their own. It's important to keep an eye on Muses, but you also need to know what you're keeping an eye out *for*.

That Muse of Heart I know always jokes about being "smooth-brained". Maybe a coincidence. She draws some intricate predictions sometimes though - abandons them quickly, doesn't look for a fight, but they're not gone. Look I like her and I can forgive the times she's been hurtful to others, but there's something there.

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So what's going on here? Aspects without belief, impulses without classes, wants without frameworks? It's very difficult to describe, and if we jump into it now, it's very easy to get the wrong impression about all of this; if you don't see how it completes the system, you might think it jeopardizes it. That if some people truly *are* so malleable, then we all are, and classes are illusionary, temporary, and pointless. That we alone have it within us to be who we want to be, and anything else can be overcome when we once thought it was all we ever would be.

It's a noble idea. But it's wrong.

We will continue building nobility out of maximizing the effectiveness, happiness, and health of the classes; to push their boundries and compulsions and training them to do what we want them to do. We will do this without lying, without shutting our eyes from the world, without cheap consolation that ignores reality instead of fiercely negotiating with it. Classes may be everpresent, but they are not all we are, and its understanding the mechanisms and intricacies that allows us to transcend what otherwise felt binding. So if we're going to sail into uncharted waters, let's double check that the boat is seaworthy.

DISCREPANCIES

(CLOSE DOESN'T COUNT)

A class is a default, a status quo, a habit. You whittle them down to its essence and it seems trivial, but a modest seed blossoms into an intricate flower - even if it is pretty damn similar to all the other

flowers of its type. Course, there's still only so much you can sum up in a few paragraphs; we adapt to social contexts, we mature, and sometimes we just try really hard to be someone else. Even if the rubberband always snaps back eventually, it can still make it pretty far, and our class impulses can be reinvented or reconciled in a way that makes us unfamiliar to others. For the outliers, for the deviations, for the circumstantial, for the not-yet-relapsed, let's have a lightning round with the usual suspects we've all grown to understand.

Originally I had inversions after discrepancies, but this works better. It's best to get the static information out the gate first, THEN address variables.

HEIRS AND PAGES both want to do good, be there for you, and apply themselves. They also both feel a compulsion to rise to challenges and high stakes, with strong opinions on "What I gotta do". The obvious difference is that Heirs are deft with details to the point of losing themselves in it, where Pages are so intimidated by the scope it's a cliché for them to run with their tail between their legs, begging anyone else to take their place. Obviously, it's not a rule, and working that Rogue impulse can help a Page try to put themselves in the same position as Heirs. Team centerpiece therapist/leader or not, however, doesn't change the endgoal: Pages want to win, Heirs want to fight. While distant, impossible dreams may stay the same, Pages would very much like to be there, and will struggle to keep their spirits up if it feels like they're not making any progress. Heirs live for the process, and integrate other wills rather seamlessly; Pages can feel overwhelmed when they're directly identified as someone's anchor, preferring intervention on their own terms. They have a passive side, but they're not a passive class, where compassion has to fit next to static ideas of principle, self-improvement, and showmanship. For Heirs, compassion comes first, and they'll often exempt themselves from going down the road they keep encouraging to others - which is to say, as their chosen win-state, without the open fragility and meekness that defines Pages living by proxy. Besides, if Heirs had the selfish-streak of vanity that Pages did, they wouldn't be so hesitant to call themselves a monarch, would they? If they have pride, it is as the sheepdog - Pages want glitz, glam, glory, superpowers, the works. Trying to share that with others is mostly guilt, as is trying to "earn" to the right to such indulgences.

You know Raimi Spider-Man was a solid Page, but it feels like most iterations lean Heir.

HEIRS AND KNIGHTS are confused only in dry descriptions, and *never* when you put them in the same room together. While they both have bravado to act like everything's fine, it's serving very different purposes; Heirs challenge others, contest opinions, and drop the

docile act when they need to get serious. Knights are always serious, and (besides making them volatile) it highlights their efforts to preserve the status quo. If there are problems, it's because people need to be reminded who they are and have their will be enacted - not *doubted*, let alone course-corrected. It's why Knights are so prone to cracking when someone explicitly says they didn't ask for it - and on that note, it's pretty hard to confuse a Thief and a Mage. Broken Heirs will drift off, but they really don't burn bridges; they have moments of curt and direct confrontation, yes, but not twitchy verbal harassment with low blows and self-loathing.

WITCHES AND SEERS border on complete indistinguishability from each other. There isn't much to go on from a surface element besides who doesn't abandon their speeches (as much), and who's easier to invite to group projects (as much). Seriously, there isn't a smoking gun here, but they're at least very likely to entertain talks of internet personality systems...so, try asking them directly? You just have to sort which aspect they consider "fun ways to organize or understand people" and which is "fun personal distractions". Give it a shot, cause with either being their way to keep ahead of self hatred and apathy, it can't hurt to give them a second method to do it.

WITCHES AND ROGUES both play things pretty safe most days, and don't make a big deal out of things. Yes, Rogues are protective and respond to trouble, but they also might chicken out, and that can be similar to a Witch's more fickle nature. Both won't have the best idea of who "they" are, personally, and won't be in a hurry to have that conversation. As cautious as they both are with people in their circle, it is more noticable how Witches..."fumble" at empathy. Working that Seer impulse is weird for them, and it's not much besides talk - they tend to be most confused if it *does* make people feel better. Rogues are incredibly attentive to friends in trouble, and are going to blame themselves if there's anything they couldn't do to help. If Witches blame themselves for anything, it's going to be either "immutable" or long in the past; distractions to help friends feel better will be much more take-it-or-leave-it.

MAGES AND MAIDS are both active, distant, and not used to second guessing things - which can sometimes blur the line a little. This confusion is cleared up not in conversation, but in action: Prospit Maids will happily tell you they'd prefer to be left alone and work on something important for you, whereas Prospit Mages will happily display how much they want to be left alone and won't tell you what they're working on because it doesn't concern you. Prospit Maids take people with them where Prospit Mages are cheerfully solitary; Derse Maids are cold but *relentless*, compared to the more wandering Derse

Mages. Ultimately, Mages can more readily own up to doing only what they want and take a nap, whereas any Maid has trouble remembering no one's forcing them to do anything; what they consider to be "stable" will shatter every now and again, but you really can't break a Mage's stride even if you cut off one of their limbs. Mages might flit with ruthlessness if there is a legitimate threat to a friend, but it's an exception that proves the rule - and Maids are a little less protective anyways, with a Bard instinct shining through.

And somehow, Pages are inbetween them. You know after decades of working on it, I feel I've found my groove and that I can live as a true middle-ground between Mages and Maids, but it's still *weird*. It's not that way by default, so is my ability to better integrate the wills of others a choice or an outlier? There's this instability to all Tier 2's that Tier 3's resolve by not recognizing the imbalance...I think. Ask a neurologist. Or don't, they'll probably think you're crazy.

MAGES AND PAGES are separated by a single notch, though Prospits hold no similar surface traits (despite a clear comparison in approach). Derse variants, however, are more easily conflated - both unsure of their place in the world, both wanting to do more, both wanting to help people, both likely to apologize for things they shouldn't, both possible to be pushed around by people who appear to know better than them (and rarely do, if they're resorting to pushes). A Page's ennui and frantic people-pleasing is often overbearing however, whereas even the most codependent Mage isn't going to be one insult away from an anxiety attack 24/7. Crucially, a Page's realization will still incorporate their need to be a savior; a Derse Mage's realization (and again, a Prospit Mage's starting point) will often be "I did what I wanted to do and no longer owe the world anything, bye", much to the disappointment of others who think their friend is still underselling themselves - and they might be, but they're still *content* with it. Derse Mages can be endearing dorks, but there is no incentive or fuel to go nuclear.

A Mage buddy of mine was a bit put off when I first told him my conclusion on our relation...he's had lots of people like me in his life, and I guess it felt a bit unpleasant. Like realizing you're crush is related to you or something. It's important to recognize that commonality though, as Mages can offer "their" way of living in much the same function (despite how unpalatable it is compared to Pages).

I think it's also important to not push Mages into Page goals, or think a Page is going to settle and do something safe. The more you confuse people who think they're no good, and people who don't care, the more damage is done. It's important to recognize people for who they are AND who they could be, without simply projecting or assuming everyone is the same. They're not. We're not.

...Okay, yes, I suppose I'm assuming a lot to, aren't I? It's a fair jab, but I understand the Page framework; what I fill with punk, classpects, and posadism is just as likely to be filled by dubstep, drugs, and christianity by another Page - even a Dersey Timebound. There's commonality in approach and self-hatred, and the more you study the narratives, the more you see the limitations - and the gaps in them.

That actually sounds kinda Seerish, don't it? You know what, put a pin in that.

SEERS AND MUSES both don't do very much, focusing on the stories of others with a hands-off approach when they can focus on talking about it. Despite this disparate difference in intensity, they do both give off an air of certainty with their speeches and social placement, but there's still things you can track. For one, Seers bluff: they know where there's gaps in their knowledge, and while they're hesitant to admit it, that means knowing they don't know everything. Just because they "expected" certain outcomes doesn't mean they weren't juggling several other possibilities, and they adapt quickly to new information - being dead wrong is a temporary setback, and they have no pride to lose in admitting that professionally. Muses survive not with vaguery, but with esotericism and faith in principle; they're often so poetic and high-minded that it's difficult to argue with them on a practical level, and most aren't *interested* in practicality as is. They talk about things, they isolate, and that allows their dogma to often go unchallenged. On the occasions they do take direct involvement, most aren't prepared for an argument, with Derse Muses likely to scatter and Prospit Muses more likely to go cold. Self-destruction is consistent, but a Witch's sass always either downplays or obfuscates such thoughts - Muses might not want to bother anyone, but their downward spirals are a formal martyrdom.

WITCHES AND MAIDS do actually blur a little as Prospits, where an easy going presentation can hide that Maids are not easy going at all. Dedicated hobbyists, but who's doing it for the hobbies and who for the dedication? What's a Witch's irreverancy, and what's a half-Bard's disinterest? Put them under some duress (or, more compassionately, pay attention when it happens) and it's best to look at who toughs through problems the simplest and most direct way; I ain't saying Witches can't buckle down and fight, but they do fight *smarter* and not *harder*. Maids are stubborn powerhouses, and overwriting reality for daring to offend their principles is their fucking jam.

Aradia and Damara are a defined contrast, but Hussie clearly figured *someone* needed reminding on what a Maid's habits are.

HEIRS AND MAIDS aren't so much a comparison as they are a mistake. I mean a Maid trying to work with people is good, and an Heir having more faith in manifesting their will is also good. It's just...I mean it's much more unlikely an Heir will try, first off, since the slow and subtle process always gives them the most dopamine compared to rushing anything along. The thing is, a Maid trying to stuff down their impatience completely and play it slow is *agonizing*. Disagreeing with others has to be as high octane as their regular self - i.e, Bards. The engine was not built to run in first gear, and where Maids hit a familiar burnout by taking on too much, they're *torn apart existentially* if they try to keep filtering their instincts. Again,

stubborn powerhouses, but it's a doomed effort to be stubborn against one's own stubborn nature. If people don't want what a Maid is selling, it's probably best to focus on what they can do alone; it will be enough for them, and they can find where that intersects with others later.

Knowing an actual Heir of Life, it's funnier watching Jane ruin herself trying to remedy her broken world and broken team. I can't help but feel my pal would just roll his sleeves up and feel alive trying to fix Dirk, Jake, and Roxy, you know? Jesus, knowing him, he might've actually found a way.

KNIGHTS AND SYLPHS aren't off by much, which makes them harder to separate than Maids and Pages...though the trick is still probably "confidence". Knights respect other people's wishes too much for their own good, while silently aware of how that gets in their way; Sylphs live for other people, and "getting in their way" is usually in regards to them trying to decide people's lives for them. Sylphs don't take orders, not really, and even a recognized and reconciled Prince impulse is still going to fire up situationally.

MUSES AND ROGUES are the most figuratively passive class and the most literally passive class, respectively. They're poor at self-preservation, empathetically attentive, and try not to call attention to themselves, but the ways they do both are at least squarely unique. Even though Derse Muses temper theirs with self-deprecation, both breeds of Muse live by their place in the universe, and soothing others with assurances that things will work out. In contrast, Rogues are protective, and the nature of that protection inherently means rebellion and argument. There are right and wrong answers, justifiable retaliations, a world where good has to be protected lest it be snuffed out. Even when it comes to evading praise and being pulled in every direction at once, Rogues *have objections to that*, because there is a central direction and state they'd prefer. They're on nearly opposite sides of the system for a reason after all, and the inversions only paint a clearer picture. No matter how they try to keep it hidden, a Page side will break out of Rogues with promises and vision...and whatever Muses are hiding will often *stay* hidden.

Honestly one of the one's I have the trickiest time parsing, if only because it's harder to interpret the surface stuff. You really, really do have to look for action, and sometimes all you've got is that Muses will say they're nothing and Rogues will say they're not sure what they are - again, a Master's certainty.

MUSES AND PAGES might actually make a bit more sense, given that we're talking about attuning to something greater and grander. Given their similarities of hero worship and wounded confidence, you can wind up with some very apt comparisons, and there's nothing wrong with showing empathy to either for intimidating (and imaginary) responsibilities. Course, Muses command ideas with the *expectation* they should, and it's not as prideless as they think it is;

they're trying to skip the argument (and collapse if they can't), whereas Pages are argumentative little bastards. Toil, effort, glory, and a balance between practicality and dogma is the core dream to chase, which is a pretty hard contrast to Muses who either aren't doing anything or won't admit they are. I mean they're not really chasing dreams anyways - they live in one made for everyone else, and personal wants are indefensible no matter how much they've supposedly "earned" it. Sharp contrast to the personal meritocracy of Pages.

WITCHES AND LORDS should seem pretty gosh darned differentiated, but there is a blip of communication that could be poked at: whether **commanding** or **changing**, they're both classes who don't overthink their primary aspect, to the point it becomes synonymous with "what they currently want". Hell, it's not *past* a Lord to hit enough self awareness to realize they're not actually the center of the universe, and it wouldn't hurt them to take a more playful approach anyways. Just doesn't change that they're still Lords, with way too much weight to swing around; how they position themselves to others, how they tackle problems, how they handle rejection, all of these are pretty clear tells. Witches might cause some real damage sometime, but it's never got the personal signature of Lords - when it's spite and not subjugation, they're more likely to resemble Thieves.

More interesting is the dynamic between them. SpaceWitch was talking about an ex-boyfriend of hers (yes, her father was also a Lord, she is perfectly at peace with her brain being fucked up), and got into detail about her own experiences and the Witches in her life. The way she figures it, a Lord's single strength is really appealing, as a single dependable connection. I mean I've seen lots of Witches build "alliances" if you can call it that. Just doesn't stick with Lords, and even she figures it's a learning experience - Lords let people down too often, but they talk so much they might convince you they didn't for awhile. Witches aren't huge on facts, but that's a preference; they're not stupid. The ones I know are some of the smartest people in my life.

The LightWitch in my life is currently dating a Lord, and has been for many years. After the last argument, we have agreed to not talk about him. For this reason, I strongly urge any personal friends of mine to not share this with the LightWitch (their name starts with an N, if you're pulling a blank), as the dangers I have written about Lords would likely send our friendship into disrepair. If she winds up marrying the guy, I don't think I can ever show this - and if she doesn't, I'm kind of worried how to show this without it being an "I told you so", you know?

...it's a complicated situation, really.

WITCHES AND THIEVES are a notch off, but it's easy to forget that since Witches don't see a point in openly identifying as an asshole. The thing is, sometimes, they will openly *be* one, toying with people because they can and further isolating themselves from the world. High amounts of self-loathing and disillusionment will provoke flashes of temper in Prospit Witches...but Derse ones? Fuck, they'll rationalize or romanticize it as all they are and ever will be if they feel bitter enough. By contrast, it's hard for Thieves to play Witch; they

don't *like* minimizing damage, or underplaying all their wants and troublemaking. The steadiest states require reconciling the Knight impulse, but it's still stable for them to just *be* a jerk - the universe makes enough sense if they do, and that means constant upkeep. Witches, as we have established, do not require upkeep.

This was a fun topic for me and SpaceWitch. She sent me a scene from Lost in Translation as homework. I get what she means. Witches off the rails.

The funny thing about Witches going full sadist is that they're actually *much worse* than Thieves if they do. Even a misfiring Knight impulse keeps real Thieves too occupied with what other people think, and the guilt will eventually burn them out if they overstep too often. A misfiring Seer impulse, smothered and broken, renders a Witch's perception of the world an unclear dumpster fire - a mess they won't clean up, a stable irrelevancy, a world that doesn't want or need them in any way whatsoever. It's not bad or good, but it's also nothing close to beautiful, holding no sway over them besides making them uncomfortable. Trouble for the sake of trouble, discord cause they can, with a constant level of bitterness that is never so overpowering it would get them to *stop*. They may someday burn out (potentially after a decade), but trying to not repeat those mistakes can overcorrect - focus entirely on others, isolate into nothingness, as they're "clearly" no good when left to their own devices. Witches can (and often *have*) done beautiful things with a spark that cannot be imitated, but more than sticking to distractions, they downplay their accomplishments to the same level. They can go bigger without worrying that spark will cause a flame, especially since such worries usually lead to doing it out of the expectation (Is that the Seer impulse still trying to rationalize the world? Does it matter?). Better to know who they are, and forgive themselves for wanting anything at all, rather than be an active class that keeps pretending they're not.

I know there's Damara, and that's a great example, but...I've heard too many stories from Spacewitch. It stings sometimes. We're on the same wavelength, but still from different ends. I know the harm she's done in the past, and I appreciate her telling me, I just...

There's a Seer of Time in her. There's a romance for suicide - not now, just "eventually, after a long life". It hurts to hear, especially since it reminds me of my own guilty language in my dark moments. And hey, she shakes me out of it right?

I just can't say that isn't fully realizing both sides of herself - I'm using the classpect system to promote healthy lifestyles, but it's not something that guarantees it, let alone sanctifies my idea of "healthy". I can't say for sure 100% there's a better version of her out there, that wouldn't think those things. I can't say I'm not selfish for wanting her to stick around. There just isn't a damn thing I can do to stop her. A lot of the time, that's kinda beautiful. Maybe this is too, from a certain angle, but I'm not in a hurry to get there. Her death is like my own - something I don't want to see coming.

THIEVES AND PAGES are both trying to "fix" themselves into bigger people, which...*might* step on some toes along the way. Beyond insecurities and fascination with heroes, pay attention to who's

delightfully discordant and who's stubborn to harmonize; Thieves do their work alone even with company, where Pages would love other people to become absorbed in something much, much bigger than themselves. Pages are most intimidating when their faith in principle outweighs their faith in themselves (which can come off as more than a little deluded), but a Thief flips that to standing tall no matter what is taken from them and what is proven untrue. Thieves can crack and slump into Knighthood, surrendering to the quiet meaning of taking orders, but Pages are either already two insults from caving into discount-Rogues, or so desperate to avoid it that they'll redouble force when confronted. When indignation is rewritten and romanticized as "a great moral injustice that transcends my personal opinions on the matter (dismayed as they may be)", Pages are more keen to resemble Maids...or bigger. It's certainly a different approach to violence than transparent spitfire individualism.

So the paired classes are Thief/Rogue and Page/Knight, and the inverse is Thief/Knight Page/Rogue...what WOULD you call this? I like "rival", cause they're in the same weight class but doing it with a different approach, you know? Ah, lemme have some fun.

THIEVES AND LORDS can both be sadistic assholes, but that isn't a class itself, is it? Dersites blur the line the most, and Prospits might have similar excuses, but it's not as complicated as it might seem. Lords posture themselves with a sense of belonging, and anyone they step on either A) Deserved it, or B) Has no sense of humor to funny jokes that could easily be considered assault. It's not like Thieves won't engage in this kind of abuse, try to play it off or justify it, but...we've established what's going through their heads. While they both may see their behavior as a response to traumatic childhoods, Thieves came out with a piece missing, and Lords decided they were the universe's missing piece. Unworthiness is a hard contrast to unwarranted worthiness, and the dichotomy of the Thief/Knight conflict has nothing to do with how Lords interact with the world, and what keeps them up at night - if anything.

My brain won't stop imagining Biff Tannen as I write this.

LORDS AND BARDS don't have much overlap as Prospits, but Derse ones have similar methods. Both will be loud and willfully irritating (mostly in their youth), but try to isolate Lords in both anger and initiative: Derse Bards are, even as pariahs, a passive class. They orient themselves around others, preferring to needle them with no rush in what they bring to the table. Lords are loud and clear in how they see the world and what they stand for, even with rudeness and detachment. Derse Lords might play along for a bit, but they won't turn down an opportunity to show strength and snap back at critics. Lords have a strong center, but it's at the forefront of their thoughts, demanding certain conditions and boundries (and occasionally

straight up lying). A Bard's neglected Maid instincts are still dutifully resilient despite hiding in the back of their head, making for thick skin that doesn't sacrifice flexibility. Like a seal. Or something.

KNIGHTS AND ROGUES will do their best to stick it out for others, but Knights kinda...“slather”, people in good vibes and encouragement, whereas Rogues know that you have to break bones to re-align them; even Derse Knights get all gooey and sentimental when they're not being a jackass. Knights have strict procedure that will help everyone except themselves; Rogues have personal-yet-vague guidelines that will help everyone and sometimes maybe themselves. All of this is besides the point that both varieties of Knights are rather loud in loyalties and worship, where Rogues are hesitant with affection when they don't want to take up people's time.

WITCHES AND SYLPHS may occasionally meet the same surface traits of “cheery, but snippy”. Sylphs have a lot of energy even when they're trying to be there for everyone else, and a Witch's wandering downplays their signature as an active class. So they might both start group projects, or get really excited out of nowhere, and nurse a noticable but not prioritized collection of sour thoughts about themselves. Stress test it: Witches wander away if the heat goes up, but Sylphs always dig in and show the Princey side to any kind of challenge waved in their face (real or interpreted). Witches don't have a damn thing to prove to anyone, and that makes sociability a choice and not a directive.

LORDS AND KNIGHTS have fundamentally incongruent DNA, but alot of surface details that match: propping people up, intense bravado, hard work, not listening to people who don't want their help, etc. With both sways, it's important to look for how readily they accept criticism - both can self deprecate, but Lords tend to get sour if you want to get a word in that they didn't approve. Knights snap back as a response to long-term mistreatment (real or imagined), but they usually volunteer to be the punchline long before then. Lords only laugh at themselves in ways they agree to, or from someone they have a huge amount of trust in - which might be no one, or subject to change at whim. Knights feel pretty worthless on the inside, with friendship always being some form of repentance or labour...and Lords, even when depressed, still seem pretty hyped on *their* story, and will try to hype friends into thinking the only real choice is to follow their lead. Lords try to know someone better than they know themselves (which is to say, overpower and overwrite the wills of others), but while Knights can have romanticized images of friends, they need those preconceptions to be *static* so they can hold on to them. The problem with Knights is needless sacrifice, and the problem

with Lords is that they haven't actually sacrificed anything in the first place.

Karkat was loud, but Karkat was also Karkat - there is no one he hated more than himself, and that was not a well-kept secret. Dave was drawing from a different source, but, I've known Derse Knights who up the bravado to dangerous levels. They still hate themselves, it's just slightly harder to tell.

KNIGHTS AND PAGES are paired, but both can be wound up so tight that you might not be sure if they're a lowballing Page holding back potential, or a *particularly* dysfunctional Knight who's failing to keep their armor up. Both will idolize people, but Pages often do so while taking notes, seeing traits they wish they had and encouraging advice they should probably take themselves; Knights often don't *want* the praise they give other people, always the outsider. Personal gripes always go through the active component first, after all, regardless of what class we're talking about...

...And despite *being* an active class, Pages frequently flounder when it comes to confrontation. At their lowest, other people will set a Page's own rules to life for them, making them punching bags and human footstools. At middling confidence they have outbursts and breaking points, which they often aren't sure how to (or if they *should*) justify; frequently tiptoeing around subjects, or trying to avoid people. A confident (or overconfident) Page will have the guts to tell people off, but it remains within a moral framework of cause/effect, crossed boundaries, and karma. Doesn't matter if it makes sense or not, it still requires active upkeep for the Page not to collapse into old habits. A Knight's temper is far more wild, far more rude. Ultimately, you're trying to distinguish unapologetically self-centered, and overapologetically self-centered.

Both can wind up as "nice guys", if you're wondering. Hopefully it's just a phase.

KNIGHTS AND BARDS are here for only one reason: someone refuses to ever have a serious discussion, their friends are out of patience, and they keep pushing dead baby jokes and fetish art. Alas, are we dealing with a Derse Knight who's dying inside, or a Derse Bard on a sadistic streak? It's an acquired taste to read between the lines, but Knights are still a little more excitable - and even Derse ones don't need to be pushed very far to show temper, or pain. There's a lot of sore spots there.

BARDS AND HEIRS are only up for confusion in Prospits - no Derse Heir is going to harass people like a Derse Bard will. Both are going to be cool under pressure, and both will be around for a conversation where they'll try to help...but Heirs are much better at doing all this without being noticed, and without being obnoxious. Even if an Heir

gets too argumentative, there's a more defined direction, where pissing people off might be necessary but never a victory itself. Bards are simply too satisfied with themselves, either ignoring or downplaying disapproval. Even if a Bard can step up to plate as a proper peacekeeper, they'll have to overcome their tone-deaf attitude and refusal to compromise or capitulate. If they're passionate or in distress, it might be a cold shower to realize how often people have been rolling their eyes at them - might hurt for a Derse Bard, but Prospits frequently fail to understand the cause and effect of their attitude. Jesters are close to the throne, but they aren't replacements,

...though, to be fair, we've (which is to say "I've") been so harsh on Bards because they never try to be anything else. Look, maybe you can't truly "confuse" the two, but trying to act more like an Heir is a step in the right direction. It's a sign they actually want to stand up for their beliefs, try to listen to people, to do *better*, to do *more*. Just know your limits, and be careful about promising to be there for people if you know you won't because that hurts worse than promising nothing in the first place. It doesn't mean you shouldn't try, though - try a Maid approach if you want to be constructive.

PAGES AND LORDS have a very disparate median in terms of attitude, but they both want fundamentally the same thing: to live in accordance with virtue, and to personally exhibit those virtues in a way that helps people and makes them feel special. Hell, narrow down sway and aspect, and they usually want strikingly similar attributes and accolades...but, Pages are who they are because they realize the sheer lunacy of what they minds zero in on. Even overcoming that with confidence, they *also* recognize that their way of thinking is an outlier, and needs to accommodate others. They fixate on what's in the way, reasons they shouldn't, and reluctantly try to understand why the world is the way it is and not the way they want it to be. Lords, however, only see what's in the way, and can even mess that up if their glasses get so rosey they can't see anything. There are Pages who are so manipulative that they won't *value* what's in the way, only using the Rogue side to pull people over without humoring a real argument, just as much as there are Lords who can slow down enough and properly empathize with those around them. As much as it's important to distinguish the two, it's more important to illustrate that **classes are not innately better or worse than any other class, and none of them define how far we'll reach or how much we'll achieve**. Pages don't "promote" into Lords just because they found themselves, and vice versa. So, let's clear up a few misconceptions.

We're measuring intensity. Hussie already shared his words on who the "most powerful class is", and I hope to pull enough of my weight and make any of that true. Besides, "power" doesn't mean well-intentioned, clever, resourceful, happy, or any of that. The power of a belief is just how much it'll hold up under duress, how well it catches on. Pages are (or at least can be) very stubborn, and very convincing. That's all there is.

A Page who can resemble a Lord is an impressive feat, but it also shouldn't be that much of a surprise: they're ALWAYS trying to step up and be someone bigger. That "start and stop confidence" will aim in the same general direction for decades to come. Now there isn't a guarantee that they'll level out and maintain that energy, let alone be consistent in what form it takes; this is why the Page section of this document described the turmoil and early stages of Pages almost exclusively. What *is* consistent is that Page's showmanship and persona reflect who they already wanted to be, and what they already valued. While it won't always be "comic book superhero", Pages fundamentally want to be something they know isn't real, and that means they have to consciously accept and indulge in the artifice of an archetype; even cowardly Pages who get on in their years will sharpen that cowardice into something that gets them what they want. For the Pages who do resemble Lords, who live life loud and proud with a contagious moral framework, they have done so by harmonizing their Rogue side to reach as many people as possible and forgive their faults (within reason, hopefully). They've learned how to redirect themselves, apologize, and defer to others *without* losing their stride and collapsing - even then, there are still spots of awkward apologies or nervous enthusiasm. A Page's initial self-loathing will always permanently depersonalize their idea of who they want to be with who they are, and **exploiting** that persona as a utility does little to change the sensation that it doesn't belong to them. Mind you, it *does*, and that can be as selflessly heroic or as egotistically treacherous as they allow it to be. Behind the personas of invincible public servant or coward failure servant, there is the individual trying to hold on, lest they lose themselves.

Deku from Macademia is a great example of a Page, sure. If you're not paying attention, you might miss that All-Might is one too. Hell, I've got guesses on Red Riot, and that fucker is Time to a T.

I have more than I would like to admit in common with Caliborn, to the point of scaring myself with what I take pride in. Sometimes, it feels like that'd just be where I'd end up, if my childhood traumas were a little different and encouraged me to trust myself more. I have other people in place to keep me in check when I go too far, and I know I will sometimes. I know I have before, and I know that anything I do won't take it back. Every Page has a skeleton in their closet, something they can't make themselves the victim for, something they can't share. You have to acknowledge it if you want to do anything positive with yourself, otherwise you get increasingly used to lying to yourself. Us Pages are close enough to Lords that many of the same dangers apply, and I consider it vitally important we do not become the same liability. We are, apparently, "more powerful", and we can do better than being *worse*.

So what about Lords looking Pagey? I mean the inner dynamics are the same - serve your gut, mythmake the past, blah blah we all

covered this. The question is, what conditions make that impulse present as *underconfident*, rather than the iconic swagger? Generally, it seems family dynamics can incentivise different Lord attitudes, where an older sibling or parent establishes a certain pecking order - but they can still be *awful* to strangers or those “beneath” them. This can also happen with friends or lovers, where their optimism in brightening days and completing tasks becomes unfiltered, but more often this is a protection bordering on ownership, rather than true deference. It’s hard for Lords to ever shake an entitled attitude, even when it’s “for” someone else. They can display genuine(*) adoration and dependency, but without actually respecting opinions or arguments. On the subject of personal deeds, one might expect that Pages are simply catching up to a Lords volition, but the truth is that Pages tend to outpace Lords at a certain threshold. Again, Lords do whatever they want, and that means they aren’t fighting for anything bigger than themselves; if they aren’t in the mood, if they don’t appreciate it, if they stand nothing to gain, they languish both career-wise and as hobbyists. Stagnant, wistful, but not retreating in defeat so much as “I’ll do it eventually” - exasperating those expecting. Pages and Lords both need to set their own terms for who they want to be, rather than try to impress everyone and be everything...but Lords truly finding themselves, rounding out and maturing, often settle for more secluded lives. The “most active class” is often happiest living for themselves first and foremost, and that peace of mind will help them figure out who they actually want to help, how much, and whether they even *should*.

I’ve met friendly Lords, sure, but not many insecure ones. You hear about them mostly - manchildren who inherited lots of money from their folks, run wild with it, freak out and cry when things get tough. Honest to god, if I have to think of a media example, Jason Brody of Far Cry 3 comes to mind. Guy is loaded, constantly doing stunts in exotic locales, and dating a model - but she makes more money than him, and wants him to grow up, so of course he throws a fit. He gets everything he *thought* he wanted over the course of the game...well, there’s a few lessons to take from it.

HEIRS AND LORDS are surprisingly harder to tell apart than you might think - *if we’re talking about Prospits*. Dersites aren’t on the table, as even the most volatile control freak of a Derse Heir isn’t anywhere *close* to a Derse Lord, stable or otherwise. But, yes, if we’re talking about Prospits, there are potential blurred lines: advice-friend, surprisingly argumentative, keeps the mood optimistic, stable sense of self, lets others lead while chiming in to confidently agree (and/or fix a few things). Most of these, as you may have noticed, are Heir cliches, as it’s borderline unthinkable to imagine an Heir who would imitate Lord-specific traits; even moments of intense violence are sporadic, and often in response to very justifiable moral outrages (abusive boyfriends of loved ones are a signature). So, what do we make of Prospit Lords who can imitate a Prospit Heir? Well first off,

congratulations, that Lord just avoided a swath of bad habits, measured their instincts fairly to the world around them, and can act as a positive and healthy individual. This is no small feat, and is almost exactly the kind of Lord this document has stressed is possible and desirable...but they aren't Heirs. Hell, if you're not lucky, then they're only faux-Heirs to a few specific people, and you can track down past friends and flames who remember indefensible acts and betrayals of trust. To be a Lord is not a death sentence or punishment, but it is a definable liability of a human personality - we will prioritize those hurt, hurting, and those in danger. They can be good people, but it is so much more work than they often *think* it is.

I have known some eggs. One, particularly, was a very close friend of mine for my first year of high school. Energetic, chummy, supportive, good for brainstorming. Picked me up in my worst moments, let me feel like I had someone in it for the long haul. Had a rough childhood, got a girl teen pregnant, all very mournful things for him to bring up, and I did my best to keep him steady - he hardly seemed like he needed it, but he appreciated me being there, and I appreciated him.

He's also the one who stole 200\$ from me, and blamed my MindBard friend. Which I believed at the time. When you experience something like that, reconcile something like that, it forever changes your definition of "genuine". I have become a more suspicious person than I care to admit, but I have never met a Lord who hasn't tried to pull stunts on the same level. I choose to believe, optimistically, that better things are possible. I'm just not going to pretend those aren't slim odds, or offer help in a way that leaves me vulnerable.

A Lord imitating an Heir has a few tells. For one, their arguments and corrections are much more common, and often on much smaller concerns that real Heirs would usually let go (but they still have a defined *point*, which is why we're not counting Bards). They're excitable, yes, and they will try to deify "your" accomplishments, they do so a little too much: their assurances are a red carpet, too much for too little, special treatment that isn't fair or earned. Lords are too quick to declare "Fuck 'em" in regards to human conflicts, where the only line is "friends of the Lord" and "everyone else" - which may be concerning for someone wondering how thin that line is. On another note, while Heirs may drop diplomacy and voice complaints on occasion, Lords are significantly more prone to such fits. They blame their tools, blame the rules, or blame the competition when they're not immediately good at something - a common Lord trait, but they're trying to get other people to agree with them now. It makes them difficult to team up with in sports or video games, alongside their habit of ignoring orders and following their impulses - you have to work *around* them. Often, words just fail to register, and that goes triple when someone tries to hold them accountable to explicit fuck-ups; denying it is one thing, but there's a common trait of an eerie silence (maybe a grumble), moving on to a new topic, and then reverting to their most comfortable opinions tomorrow. See, these Lords aren't going to ever pull the Mage isolation business, because **they already are inverted.** A Lord playing Heir is invoking their

passive side as far as it goes, and while that's impressive, it can only do so much to bridge the gap. Lords were never a passive class, and while they can be supportive friends, they too often lack the patience to tough through someone else's crisis or handle it with nuance. If you can't figure out if they're a Lord or an Heir, go track down their ex, and hear some stories.

Like I said, there's a wonderful narrative of conflict in this double-inverse - of would-be rulers fighting for their people. It's why I think "King" should be seen as an optional class name, marking someone who really is the de-facto figurehead of their particular circle of friends. Lords have the capital (self-assurance), and Heirs have the magic touch (therapist compulsions), but neither are innately - it must be won, and it must be chosen. Both often have the opportunity to take it, to align with it, but Heirs are responsibility without interest in power, and Lords are power without interest in responsibility. The Baron has to consciously accept squabbles of diplomacy, and the Hero has to consciously accept the full scope of the role they serve, and trust they've earned. It is a sign of growth for either class to be that, and harder still to live up to that promise.

Any class could be a King or Queen with that in mind, really. It's just the right mix of strength in your words, commitment to others, and being accepted by those people. What makes Heirs the "best choice" is how difficult they are to corrupt, falter, or profit from it. They're sturdy individuals, and that makes titles and thrones feel pointless - which is exactly the kind of person you WANT to put on a throne. If you lust for attention and fame, if you think it's going to make you feel better, you probably shouldn't have authority over people. Grow up in a small throne, you might want the big one...but if you actually sit in it, the smallness follows you. Everyone else, the people looking to you, the people you promised to help, they all look bigger. Louder. Like a threat.

One thing leads to another and you start executing peasants.

DISCREPENCIES CONT: PRINCES

(THE RIDE NEVER ENDS)

PRINCES AND LITERALLY FUCKING ANYTHING are a major problem. They're constantly trying ("trying") to reinvent themselves, they're inherently oppositional, and they hate people putting words in their mouth...so, we're not off to a great start here. If any of them have made it this far, they've already got some Strong Opinions on everything said; if you know one in your life, trying to broach the subject secondhand will still probably rub them the wrong way. Being a Prince is hard, and hearing that shitty things they've done in the past isn't something they can distance to "younger phases" is something of an existential terror to them. Saying that they're another class is usually code for wishing they *were* another class, and you know what? You're almost there. It's just easier to break the cliches of Princehood if you know what they are, and can admit when you stumble. It's not all bad, you know; you can just be a "Good Prince". There is such a thing, but any hesitation felt to trying is a lot of the reason you don't hear about those, compared to the horror stories.

There is probably a way to reach out an olive branch and describe Princes in an inarguably accurate way that they'd agree with, but

we'd lose the merit of recognizing their most clear and signature sins. Can't we stop trying to tiptoe around subjects and just talk frankly without worrying about their feelings? For once? If they're going to argue, can't we just argue back with the truth? After all, just because you can always come up with an argument doesn't mean you *should* - we are trying to get them to hold their destructive impulses accountable, right? Let's humble some motherfuckers.

I know a Prince who fought me years on whether he was one or not; a big problem was I didn't have a firm enough description. No joke, that helped convince me to write this alot more than I kinda want to admit. Bit selfish, isn't it? I mean "bettering people via conflict and competition" is a valid translation of my classpect, but is it still unbecoming for a Page? Hang on, let me cover my ass...

PRINCES AND PAGES hold no related components, but they are both the most unstable of active classes. They can both struggle with who they are, justify cruelty, agonize over their principles, and speak as absolutes in their circles. Of course, a few spots of overlap won't change that Pages generally act like Pages, and Princes generally act like Princes; all the depression and ennui in the world doesn't change 80% of their respective personality traits. Even with the most presumptuous Pages and the most openly wounded Princes, the damage is in completely different areas, as a Page's impulse drives them to failure and a Prince's impulse drives them to misery - beliefs so titanic they crush the spirit, and beliefs so brittle that the spirit withers. For Pages, obligations are strong enough to last a lifetime (hence why they often incorporate childhood wonders), and attempting to achieve that through proxy or persona is only a transitional stage to finally admitting who they are. Princes, infamously, do not step off the pedestal, where their actual idealism is too *easily* ignored. Pages want to be the perfect representative of their aspect, and Prospit Princes might *think* they want that but it's not a collaborative effort; the words of a hateful stranger can give a Page pause for thought, where even a Prince's closest friends will have difficulty so much as nudging them. Even then, it's Derse Princes who often dream of having *conquered* their aspect, reigning above it with cold control. It's not...really comparable, if you lay it out like that, and that might be a contributing factor why they'll try not to mention it outside of aforementioned teenage supervillainy. Or if they're drunk.

Look, just because you're a hopeful dreamer who's weirdly threatened by the people you're trying to help, that doesn't mean your dreams are inherently worse, or that you need to always shit on them. Theatricality, self-deprication, and rallying cries are only cliches of Pagehood, and not exclusive. Princes will find life far easier if they learn to laugh at themselves, and reach more people by displaying all those little fragile hopes and dreams. Still, while this shows one way

to even out a Prince's rough edges, it's an intentional deviation of instinct rather than a default - a Prince has to let off the gas and stop breaking their ideals, where a Page just has to learn to take responsibility and control of their compulsive optimism. We're not saying Pages can't go off the deep end, but it's certainly a completely different one compared to Princes.

In a perfect world, they'd compliment each other - if a Page ever goes too far, a Prince reels them in. If a Prince is too pessimistic, a Page counters with optimism. The truth is that Pages and Princes are EXCEEDINGLY likely to engage in codependence - Pages are trying to make sense of the world, and might believe someone claiming to have "all the answers". Everytime the Prince falters or feels sullen, the Pages do anything and everything to cheer them up...and anytime the Page starts getting uppity and talking back, Princes put on the pressure, stalling a Page's development. Thieves are the second most likely to try this shit, but they're also not as good at it - even in Homestuck proper, Tavros shook himself loose from Vriska faster than most.

Faster than me, anyways.

Xefros and Dammek were very well put together. I have to wonder how many else went through the same thing, to represent it so clearly. Abusive relationships can take a lot of different forms for a lot of people, but there really is just this ugly equation when it comes to Princes and the Pages who carry their capes. And you know what? We take that abuse while they flip their lid at stubbing their toe. Hussie was right: Pages are the strongest class. Most reliable, most useful? Fuck no - but we're strong enough to put up with all of our own shit on top of anyone else. Gotta' make the most of it.

PRINCES AND THIEVES are separated by a notch - if it were a gradient, we likely wouldn't be talking about it. Now Prospits are pretty easy to parse: even if those Thieves try to be supportive, they're far too curt in the process, and more honest about being exasperated. Thieves gravitate to "look out for number #1" philosophies, after all...but a *Derse* Prince is capable of making the same claim. Self-aggrandizing "team-asshole" is almost the exclusive mask of Derse Thieves, so what separates a Prince if they want it? At a surface glance, it's hard to tell; there's a difference in scale, but gloating about being a "survivor" or a "savant" isn't a very clear cut difference. They are responses to their own misfiring inversions, of a world that either restricts or suffocates the "suckers" not smart enough to keep ahead. They will both cave eventually, but sometimes, you don't have time for that.

Really look at Lil' Hal. If you had to *imagine* a Derse Thief of Heart, how far off would he be? The sass alone.

One catch is transparency; a lot of Princes will everything they can to prove they're "above" their aspect, and that's even more visible in this state. They will want to skew things their way as much as Thieves, but there really is something unique about wanting to blow it to smithereens first. Even then, Derse Princes grow out of that teenage supervillainy for a reason: their high opinions require complex and multi-layered justifications to be believed, for themselves most of all. Frequently wanting more than they can justify, it's easier to say happiness is impossible and then just double-think your way to

what you wanted...though, it's also not impossible to find a Prince so egocentric they actually *will* try to back up their exclusive authority as a Thief^2. At that point however, we're no longer comparing bandits and politicians, so it's best to consult "Princes and Lords".

PRINCES AND KNIGHTS are identical in the bullet points they prefer: trying to help everyone, shoulder burdens, bravado, quiet agendas, pressure to give up, internal feelings of worthlessness. They are, however, two steps removed no matter how you slice it. For Prospits, this altruistic attitude is fairly consistent; for Dersites, it's often what's left if their swagger and bluster breaks, making it often more a confession rather than a consistent persona - and if it *is* consistent, it's one that snaps to something else after a year or two. The thing is, they're still not actual Knights, and not even because their behavior is more conditional; too distant to play lackey, not guilty about liking praise, wanting to socialize but twitchy to slights, managing other people's lives instead of taking orders, more a caretaker than a servant, thinking they can fix (not just complain about) everyone else's problems...isn't this familiar? Some Princes might chalk this up to learning lessons, becoming "wiser" and "more mature" Knights, but there's a much simpler answer staring them in the face: they're just depressed Sylphs. Congrats, you discovered inversion.

It's the most common miscommunication for Princes - you're allowed to help your friends without deciding it's your one and only personality trait. Some of that might be from being double-inverted, but the rest is probably from romance. Hurting yourself to help someone else is...overhyped.

Alright, fine, what's the harm? Inversion's healthy, right? Sure, sure, but not if you don't invert the aspect with it; Princes playing Knights (or, again, depressed-macho-Sylphs) are often still trying to work with their primary aspect, which becomes increasingly fragile after being stretched out as the "universal problem solver" it never was. Princes are stuck accepting only pyrrhic victories in a constant state of stress and unease, rationing out their own carefully approved beliefs which still benefit the Prince whether they realize it or not. On the other hand, a Knight getting uppity and trying to revel in an aspect meant for everyone else is an oil and water situation. Despite pride, Knights think of other people as the exemplars of their aspect, and cannot stabilize the revulsion of pretending otherwise; despite responsibility, Princes will always represent what strengths of their aspect they deem permissible (and those they don't), struggling to admit when it benefits them and struggling more to make it benefit anyone else. Both too often ignore the solutions available until they crack, thinking they've abandoned their principles when they just dusted off the backups. Figure it out, be happy, and don't fetishize your sadness.

Both the Striders sure, but it's more common than you think. *Epecially* for Princes.

PRINCES AND SYLPHS are the same class, congrats, do you want a cookie? Hopefully, a Prince acting more explicitly like a Sylph should be a mark that *they are a Prince*, but I suppose one may suggest they're a true Sylph with only a Prince inverse. Make no mistake, the line never blurs to the point of being indistinguishable: the world's most proudly self-driven Sylph and the world's most optimistically helpful Prince will, still, always, eternally, young or old, default to their most comfortable state without constant upkeep. Learn both sides of yourself, invoke as appropriate, but don't get uppity because there is a limit to flattery here - being stuck with these impulses doesn't mean being stuck as all you are, and complaining isn't going to change anything. Get introspective. Reconciling who you are, who you could be, who you want to be, there are only positives there.

PRINCES AND MAGES don't have much in common, but reading the descriptions can leave some Princes (mostly Derse) to claim they either always were a Mage, or transitioned. I mean if a Mage accepts their aspect even if it's kind of shit for them, and a Prince breaks down their aspect into fragments, you're kind of left with the same general amount of unsable information - in theory. In practice, Princes have what they have at the cost of rejecting everything else, making sweeping statements on a multitude of different topics they're not always qualified to make. Mages keep it simple, and sounding profound is usually an accident that was irrelevant to the point they were making - just what works, the quiet truths they trust, with a faith in the greater whole of their aspect even if they can't see it yet. Mages may not expect special treatment, but that's a far cry from expecting famine, and this is to say *nothing* of the defensive and spiteful attitudes Princes are known for. Even stuffing it down makes it worse, since it doesn't take a genius to spot the difference between "someone who doesn't care" and "someone desperately trying to prove to anyone looking how much they don't care". I mean past the surface notes, the truth is Mages care alot about a couple things, and they don't really hesitate in mentioning it. Are there sore spots? Sure. Maybe. But you have to look for them, and Princes trying to hide theirs only makes it more obvious.

"Magic Scientist" and "Scientist who Fights Magic" can be confusing metaphors to put next to each other. Remember we're talking scholars/alchemyists versus aggressive atheists, besides all the other fun personality traits we've mentioned. Honestly, the metaphor is secondary to the brain chemistry.

Follow up: why the hell would a Prince want to be known as a Mage anyways? The Heir impulse of a Mage is often woefully malnourished, and their ability to stand idle to suffering is well documented. Princes

have a Sylph inside them that's significantly more difficult to keep quiet, where trying to feign indifference hurts everyone. How much is it really worth to *pretend* you don't care? And how much preventable tragedy will a Mage permit, because they think it the way of the world? Even if they reach out and get burned, even if they're overprotective and stifle others, at least a Prince's guilt compels them to scrutinize their actions - give up, most days, but the opportunity to change and learn is present. Mages are not *nearly* as self-critical, and may only redirect themselves as much as is the bare minimum - not what's requested, not what's needed, nowhere close to what's possible. Still, it's ultimately up to both of them, on their own terms, if they want to change. Perhaps all this entry serves is to let others identify the two.

There's a lot of fictional Mages who might lean Princey but are really just the rare variant of Mage that's gone fucking bananas. Aiden Pearce of Watch Dogs is *reviled* by the gaming community, but I remember showing the E3 demon to a lovely friend of mine who responded with "He even walks the same way I do." Having played the game through, I can say he's an excellent example of the worst kind of Mage, to the point I've joked he's the evil version of my friend...who has still seriously considered vigilante activity, to be fair. Mostly a teenage thing for him. But he was serious, at the time, and it never truly went away. We fought about that once. I'm not what stopped him, I'll tell you that.

PRINCES AND MAIDS are driven, impatient, and doing their best to fix everything they see as wrong with the world. They're both generally pretty skewed on what's actually in front of them, but **creating** an aspect is significantly less dangerous than **destroying** one (usually). Even then, a Prince's idea of "practicality" is influenced by their Sylph touch, so it's hard to do one without the other. Noticably, Maids rarely tire of dirty work, and rarely weigh those deeds as "merit" for winning an unrelated argument. This is to say nothing of the pride a Prince often feels from delegation and approval (closet Sylph), where Maids work alone even if it is for someone else. Maids have raw momentum, where Princes languish "if I can't do it, no one can". Look, if you want to be a smart, capable, trustworthy human being, just be one - that isn't a class in itself. There are some truly awful Maids out there, shitting on the lives of people around them without remorse, and trying to trace which is the Maid impulse and which is the Bard impulse misses the point. Creating, destroying...Jesus, just be a good person, okay?

I am keeping my eyes out for an AFAB Princess, or an AMAB Maid (butler?). Princes, however, are not an unbiased source in finding one.

PRINCES AND BARDS were already close due to being paired classes, but a Bard's refusal to be classified and a Prince's refusal to be classified as a Prince exasperate the issue into some tricky camouflage. In both, sway determines a lot: Prospit Bards are very unrestrained with rambling questions, but Prospit Princes always take a serious tone shift when they need to make a point. Derse Bards have

an enthusiasm for incessant and politically incorrect sadism, whereas Derse Princes have rules on what can and cannot be said (even if they change to reflect personal vendettas) - in short, Derse Princes will explain why you're wrong for not laughing, whereas Derse Bards don't explain anything and continue with the same joke (which may contain slurs). The Royals both need other people, but Bards don't seem to understand they do, and aren't really interested in pushing out *their* ideas compared to repeatedly arguing with *yours*. A Prince can pretend to be a clown on their terms, but they've got too much fight to be pushed around and ignored like one - even if they try.

PRINCES AND LORDS are very disparate in ingredients; **destroying** an aspect with skepticism and **commanding** it as living dogma are almost complete opposites, really. Yet, despite a hundred states of anxiety beforehand, some Princes really do think the best thing they can do is be *louder* and aggressively try to overpower everything in their way. The two classes have instabilities from different sources, but it can be difficult to tell when there's so much dick-measuring and boasting clogging up the useful data. Now it's the Prospits who irrefutably prove this as two different classes, as the unrestrained (almost childlike) optimism of those Lords is a stark contrast to the moodier patience of a Prospit Prince. While they may yearn for a Lord bravado, it's a pretty unwieldy mask to wear...but, Derse Princes, as we've established, love masks, and they can hurt a lot of people while they do it. If they're your only examples of a Prince, you might be forgiven thinking they're the same class as Lords.

"Ruler"! HAH! CALLING YOU OUT CARL JUNG, FUCKING AMATEUR HOUR

Okay yeah, Hussie noticed it first. But it's still fun to laugh at dead old people who are scared of communism. That and whatever Homestuck fan had a see saw where "Princes and Bards" lead into "Lords". Jesus, they modeled the WHOLE THING over "masculine aggression" and "female compassion". That's such a fucking gross oversimplification, and I'm triply pissed off that "Time" is seen as some inherently evil aspect to them. Well guess what fucko, the gender neutral almost-Lord is about to piss in your cheerios.

theyre not reading this why am i even typing this dumb dumb dumb

Let's ignore the rudeness for a second and look internal: a Prince with this much heft is putting all their faith in their destructive impulse, doubling-down on sneering and spite. Their aspect is under their control only by virtue of a violent stranglehold, which means it's a depressing series of conclusions that sound like "No it's impossible and only an idiot would try" and "It's the weakness of all humans and only I am smart enough to see through it, unlike you". Yet, it's the Sylph impulse that's doing the heaviest lifting, giving form and direction to the remaining aspect dwelling in this philosophy, creating paths forward for anyone and everyone around them. It's

hard to even tell what *doesn't* count as a misfire here, but it's worth noting the catch: Tyrant Princes are still very helpful, involved, and looking to other people for validation. Now usually that's after or during shitting on anyone who tries something (that the Prince didn't suggest), fostering and exploiting dependencies as their only close relationships. It's just pretty noticable that, past all their bluster, they're hugely dependent on an audience, and think the best way to prove that is to do something for them. It's noticable that, past all their constant criticism, they can dish it out but can't take it, always inventing excuses on the spot. They have a few talents they hype up as much as possible, and if you've got something better - let alone *overtake* them - they will throw an honest to god tantrum. Trying to match a Lord's aggression doesn't make them stronger; it only makes them more fragile, terrified, desperate, and broadcasts that to everyone in their radius.

It's not the best that Princes can be. It's just what makes the most sense to them. The most natural. I suppose that's why "Ult-Dirk" is the way he is. It's...accurate.

Are Lords dismissive of others? Yeah. Are they helpful? They like to be, but they don't care what you think about it. Defensive if they're not treated with respect? Even if they lash out (which isn't always), they have nothing to lose, because Lords operate on certainity of their place in the universe and how great they are. Even becoming lucid of this fact (which this document has recommended) means living next to the everpresent seduction of "I am a golden god". Princes playing Lord just can't keep it going, and that means breaking down most days; quiet, somber moments (often drunk) where they apologize and confess their shame, often to the victims they've bullied (or repeatedly attempted to bully) into intimacy. Lords may have victimhood, but it's as loud and ruthless as the rest of them, and it's usually to back up what they're aiming towards. Princes in tears aren't reinforcing their identity, they're admitting they're frauds. There is shame to bridges they didn't burn, but didn't fix...and Lords just aren't the type for shame. Regret, pain? Sure. Not shame. Even Prospit Princes come close to a realization they're making things worse by overtrusting their instincts, but it's so difficult to get any kind of Prince to do something about it. If they stop acting like a Lord, they'll just reinvent themselves again, but at least that proves they never were one in the first place.

I have the pleasure of knowing a Lord of Void. It's interesting finding someone who says "nothing matters" as a good thing, often accompanied by "I also do not matter" (he slid into self-aggrandizing eventually, but for the most part he's suitably defused). I did wind up pushing him a bit too far...I still say he swaggers about too much, faults people for initiating arguments while expecting his statements to go unchallenged. I put on enough pressure to hear him make his points, and they sure as hell weren't enough for me...but, they were enough for him. I've seen Princes argue, and he ain't one. There's "Would fall apart if he was proven wrong in an argument" and "Doesn't realize he's capable of losing an argument".

Things ended up going too far when he was busy trying to claim cancel culture is a problem because his brother had an incident, and there was no other evidence besides that...just a bit of conjecture, but, it didn't really go further than the anecdote. Why would it? He's a Lord. I actually miss the mental gymnastics Princes get into; at least they pivot. There was some other stuff too, but, I shouldn't vent. The purpose of these little slices of my experience is just to articulate particulars of class interactions and cliches. Your own experiences matter more than me, and I hope you all keep a look out - I'll probably make more sense when you're *done* reading this document.

PRINCES AND HEIRS are...I mean...like we're all seeing the obvious storytelling significance here, right? Even if you're not a Prince, Heirs are tempting: a comforting therapist who fights for their friends, ignores their doubts, always knows how to reapply their aspect into healthy forms, guides others through confusion...yeah, of course any Prince would love to style themselves as this. On the other hand, Heirs have their best qualities shine brighter if they aren't shy about leadership and correcting others. Most Princes doing their best come off as (or introduce themselves as) Knights, but a healthy middle ground of all compulsions *might* lean Heir-ish, the same way that circumstances might make an Heir bolder. There's probably a lesson here about the people we grow into, rather than who we started as, but that still doesn't change the fact that *either* of these two examples will still have bad days. The Heir will go Mage and drift off, or go hyper-therapist in a way that's hard to confront ...and we've established what Princes are capable of, *especially* when they get complacent.

It hurts to hear, but Princes will always have a huge potential for damage, seemingly for their entire lives. Learning to deal with that (or, more commonly, ignore it) doesn't "cure" them of Princehood. An Heir's dynamics and defaults are permanent brain chemistry as soon as they're recognizable, and Princes don't "upgrade" into Heirs either. Squirm, sneer, let the whole world know that you're not convinced, and just wind up one more cliché; hopefully, you take what's compiled here, and do something better. You want to prove yourself? Break the mold? Be a good human being, your way. Call it Prince, call it Personality Archetype #11, call it *Spicy* Heir, call it something you made up, whatever, it's still *you*, and several other people you can learn from rather than trying to ice skate uphill. Accepting that shouldn't be followed by helpless whining that you're fated to be a bad person; a good line from a mediocre video game once said "Good is something you do, not something you are". Unless you've got something better, I suggest you keep it in mind.

Or you can sulk. That'll show me.

Like I said, calling a class a "King" is just...I don't know, I like to think of it as "resident social groups focal figure and meme". You could do that with any class, you know? These are all just words surrounding people - what actually matters to you?

I like to think that the best version of *any* class is the ability to own up to your own belief structure, recognizing it's an illusion and arguing it's merit regardless - better than projecting or assuming. Heirs and Princes both avoid that: Heirs barely realize what they're doing, and Princes failing to understand their fragile happiness isn't universal. One too modest, the other too wound up. Hence the names. None of them mean good or evil, and you can get over yourselves because you are or aren't "ideal".

Life sucks. If I had another option, I just might pick it. So long as we're stuck here, let's make things easier for each other.

- - -

Okay. We've established what classes are and aren't, in a suitable amount of detail. The totality, the irrefutable, the deviations, the potential, all of it. We set the boundaries well enough to discuss those that cross them freely.

One last dance.

AUTHORS

(PARADOXES, PLASTICS, PHILLISTINES)

The reason someone can be a "destroyer" for their whole lives is that they can't actually completely remove (or "fix") what they're fighting. It vexes them, but it also keeps them "bound"...but there is a step past that. When an aspect is not just beaten, but rendered irrelevant; at that point, does it matter which one it was? Can they tell? Can anyone? There's no need to destroy what isn't a threat, when the whole *goal* of the Royals was to force it into being what they want it to be anyways. These two can, in 100% totality, **transform** ideas into whatever they want, without hesitation or doubt. It is complete freedom, but at a price: they're so malleable they're hard to hold on to, and nearly impossible to build anything up. Is it not *inherently* nihilistic oblivion, but the last bungee cord that always kept Princes and Bards "bound" has been cut.

Beauty is fragile enough to break without knowing how to put it back together, disdain costs nothing, and meaning can be rendered as dry as words on a page. It takes work to make something believable - a lot of work. If you don't, then it's all just shapes and distractions...but being on the same tier of intensity as the Master classes, it won't stop these two from asserting themselves regardless; absorbing and reorganizing ideas, looking at those with half their story written, and trying to fill in the rest.

I'm not blindly filling in the blanks with these two. Homestuck accounted for all people. And some don't belong in the world of ideas, according to Hussie apparently.

But they should. And I'll make sure it happens.

AUTHORS CONT: IDENTIFICATION (AMONG US)

The thing about these two is that they're likely to have verbose ideas on who they already are. With everything established thus far, we can at least *try* to establish what they are or aren't, with some grist to the argument. So, with sincerity, please consider the following:

- 1: None of the classes thus far have resonated with you.
- 2: Multiple classes have resonated with you, and the discrepancies section has not helped.
- 3: A class has resonated with you, but only in certain sections (this is doubly important if you don't see yourself in the unhealthy "ugly sides").
- 3a: You would argue the reason you only resonate with certain sections is you "matured", "grew out of it", or otherwise permanently silenced selective, chronic, lifelong habits.
- 4: You were already 100% sure about your classpect due to a prior experience with the Homestuck fandom, but none of this matches.
- 4a: You were already 100% sure about your classpect, but have changed it now/recently to something else that you are 100% sure about.
- 4b: The new classpect you are 100% sure about doesn't match the behaviors here either.
- 4c: The classes described below DO resonate with you, give you pause for thought, but you rationalize it away as momentary doubts in 30 seconds.
- 5: Assuming you don't have a class.
- 6: Reading the following descriptions for these two classes, or this section, and claiming "Everybody thinks like that".
- 6a: The idea that everyone does not, in fact, think like that, is existentially terrifying.

If enough of these sound familiar, you're probably one of the classes here. If you are, but still don't agree with it, we can at least describe them well enough so that outsiders can recognize them. With all this in mind, let's get this show on the road.

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PRIESTS are individuals born into an eternal Tabula Rasa, constantly shifting their moral code and behaviors from year to year, social group to social group. They have a great listless boredom, leaving them prone to low energy and inaction. While this often leaves them attaching their self-worth to small talents, gimmicks, catchphrases, and other petty concerns ("Just let me have this."), it's not a rule; they're prone to wild and sudden creative sparks, ready to commit

their lives to a new career, hobby, lifestyle, project, or even *people*. Too often, these are fleeting curiosities at something “new and exciting”, which fail to make it past the blueprint stage; rarely accountable to their promises, Priests are often dismissive of embarrassments as much as anything (or anyone) that fails to interest them. Often the most content Priests are the ones who float between idle passions, riding the waves of their wandering fascinations without taking it too seriously, simply enjoying the company of their friends. For those that wax spiteful over making it in the history books, there is the rare iteration that has enough intelligence, intrepidity, or inheritance, to chase those wants - but they’re never gonna catch them. All it does it make them lose sight of what actually matters, and what they already have.

I’m about to make a lot of claims.

But even if it hurts, I’m gonna do my best to articulate this. You either recognize it in yourself, or someone else will recognize it in you - and for the record, I haven’t met a single Priest who came from a happy home, so reserve some judgements.

Priests often feel like an insignificant witness, a conduit or beacon to the beauty of the world around them - yet, this isn’t their focus. They’re not that *content* being insignificant, and most take in the light of what’s around them in order to reflect it in whichever direction they want. Princes destroy their aspect because they want it to do far more than Thieves, and Priests want far more than Princes. They’re attached to ideas of fame, glory, control, and authority, but lack a *personal* language to force into place; still, with a vague outline of assertion and conquest, you could call it “Time-ish”. Both to justify it to the world around them and themselves, Priests **transform** an aspect (or all of them?) to get what they want. Too often this makes them careless, giving the impression they don’t care about much of anything genuinely...but, they do seem to believe it in the moment. Sometimes. It makes it complicated to know them personally, as it’s not always clear how much they care for the people around them, and they don’t always know themselves. Ideas that come from people and the ideas *of* people all blur together where it can be difficult to differentiate devotion, fleeting fascination, facade, or dangerous obsession. By always acting in accordance with their interpretation of “the will of the universe”, they veer towards arguments of blamelessness when they shouldn’t, where everything they do is “objectively correct” somehow. They often wind up caring a great deal for their present company when they didn’t intend to, or abandoning said camaraderie hastily because they felt it was holding them back. Their aspect, or at least their focus, is themselves: their individuality, their consciousness, their identity, their story, their name and legacy, as mundane or spectacular as they ever care for it to be.

Feels like "Adaptation" translates to "Destruction" sometimes. Look Time's my wheelhouse, but I'm a Page born and bred - hyping up reality, the IDEA of reality, is my own delusion, and I've got a Rogue of Space in the back of my head to fill the gaps. Course, if Time's destruction, and Princes are destroyers, ain't it redundant? Now, an actual Prince of Time is...technically Kanaya, following inversions. I have to imagine Hussie agreed since her turning into a vampire is a pretty clear example of rebuking inevitability. Still. What Princes "do" to their aspect is leave their mark on it, defy it, get twitchy and refuse to let it be...all Timebound amounts to is seeing that itself as values. Not burning down your hopes and dreams, but dreaming of burning something down - anything, really! And if that's the value, and it's meant to be universal, than as much as you might overthink the time you have left and want more, you respect the PRESSURE it puts on someone, and how we all compete with each other in GLORIOUS CHAOS.

Caliborn is, paradoxically, a very strong believer in anti-belief. A determined artist in regards to anti-art. He altruistically sees harmony in everyone seeking self-interest and competition. I get it. Obviously. A much more deft and self-aware hand is Aradia, who tried to not take things so personally, and has much more restraint in where her talents would do good. But Caliborn is very important, because while Priests aren't Lords of Time, they're comparable. You could see it as an ingredient.

The most stable and agreeable Priests do and say little of substance - either from having a good thing going already, or a dry imagination. With the ability to be "anything", they can readily choose "nothing", existing as the most neutral human being you could meet. They just *are*, idly drifting and defining themselves by loose talents, "weirdness", and even mental disorders. Always the outsider, it's very likely they'll be the one to say that no class mentioned thus far registers, and this whole thing is probably making a big deal out of nothing - but those are threads you can pull on, where even mutability is immutable. Their absolute individuality comes at the price of equally strong ideas about *everything else*, and they won't always be a bystander; they are, without a doubt, the single most potentially dangerous class there is. With a fluid sense of morality and self, they can do and say whatever it takes to chase their dreams of import and legacy. Who they hurt, who they were, can always be left in the past in a way that will alienate anyone who's stuck around...or, anyone who asks around. There's truly nothing holding them back in the moment, yet this requirement of needing other people to believe in their work, believe in *them*, means they require more and more validation as "upkeep" the bigger their dreams get...and yet, the bigger dreams create bigger emptiness, making them prone to lash out at anything short of *exactly* the response they want from people. It's not pretty. For anyone. But as fragile as it may feel sometimes, as cliché as it may sound, trusting others and truly listening to them might be the best fix.

I wish I had better advice. I sincerely mean that.

"Priest" is what I came to eventually. "Lich" was considered, but felt too accusing, too demeaning. "Serf", for their lack, but that's just got no flair, and doesn't resonate with the whole of it. "King" could work, except for the frankly alarming amount of queer people who qualify...abuse and negligence seem a commonality in their childhoods, so it shouldn't be a surprise that those are the voices that go unheard the longest. Still, "King"...Hussie did leave that spot open, technically. I've made my thoughts clear, but you gotta wonder what he thought - and believe me, he knows.

Prospit Priests are, if all their needs are met, “fine”. Normal, well-adjusted, modest, keeps a few jokes going...and really not much else. Which suits them. They’re still overly-eager about sharing any joke they hear with the 1-2 most important people in their lives, still not easily inspired or invested to anything beyond them, but they can truly be harmless. Of course, if they start getting *sketchy*, they wind up people who really want things to stay normal; more vocal about which voices feel unpleasant, more assertive about wanting things to go their way, less and less patience for those that step out of the drawn lines. At this point, their downfall is their own casual honesty: increasingly bitter yet still orbiting the people in front of them, they can say awful things about people not in the room, and openly walk back on whatever they claimed to believe in before. Gaslighting is not a tactic at this point, it is instinctive reflex; the more they have, the more they want, the more they will spin doctor anything to keep hold of their social group...or, again, they’re just people with no aspect higher than the latest funny movie they watched. Just watch the commonalities, is all.

They’re so...immaterial, sometimes. Distinct IN PERSON, but...I mean do I point to “fake-friend twist-villains” here or what? They’re not sociopaths (...I don’t THINK, holy SHIT I am not qualified for that), just phillistines. Simple. A bit flaky. OCCASIONALLY power hungry, if it’s in front of them. I do at least, know that even my early drafts, one of my friends flipped out from it being too close to home, someone they knew, someone who ruined their entire social circle. So they’re around. But they seem to erode trust in main classes more than stand out enough to be recognized as their own thing...even though, lots of people have been screwed over before.

I do know one (I mean, currently, I’ve met 2 others who were on varying levels of “sketch”, and my father is probably this one but I can’t rule out Derse). He’s in the “chill” category. He has answered alot of questions. I wasn’t quite sure what he was at first. He looked at the class fan quiz and said “Muse” felt right. I didn’t believe him at the time, but...well, from a certain point of view, bullseye.

Derse Priests often enjoy being “the devil you know”, and tend to be more aware of how their emptiness is wrong - or at least, discordant with others. They know to never truly believe who they are, or doubt what they’re capable of...yet, no mask will ever truly fit them, and they struggle to find others who will support their chosen position. Their shared components with Princes shine through; wrestling and interrogating their discontent. This can make their “aspect construction” much more intentional and self-aware, knowing it’s fragile and dependent on others...which can make them paradoxically loyal to friends, desperately trying to be “useful” to people they relate to. They are lonely, selfish, unless they aren’t: people rub off on them, and they know that holding on to them makes them stronger, even if they doubt their ability to sustain it. This also makes their manipulations much more of a conscious deception, and it’s easier to spot how they’ll wear different faces for different circumstances or people. They have an easier time reconciling, challenging, and overcoming their hollow nature...but if they choose to embrace it

willingly, and try to conquer a world they *know* was not made for them, there is a dark pride in their successes and betrayals.

It's hard to say what media depictions to point to on this that aren't so villainous it only hurts my case. I know two personally, at least; one more recent and candid who puts trust in me, and the other one of my oldest friends who wants nothing to do with me anymore. She was smart. Smart enough to know she was different, but laughed it off as "evil". She saw something familiar there, and presented loud and proud to friends...but she couldn't shake her own irritation at being told to do literally anything she didn't want to. So many wild promises, so many enthusiastic starts, and then a sneer or a shrug when I try to follow through with her, or just ask what happened.

I think I only now realize how hard she tried. But the times she let me down, the times she hurt me to protect herself, the times she told me to shut up for crying under her abuse, will never go away until she apologizes. Which she probably won't - when she hurt me, I lashed back in my own need for justice and got her kicked out of the house we were staying in. I guess I don't really *regret* that (she got all manipulative to my friends in response, which was why I figured she too dangerous to be kept around) but it's weird reconciling potential. Weird thinking she really wasn't lying when she tried to be a good friend all those times - she just, struggled, and needed it argued to her. For what it's worth, she was an incredible author and roleplayer. Smart, good wit. I'll always respect that. But it's pretty hollow coming from me.

IDENTIFICATION: Priests are complicated enough that one can't just list a couple classes they *might* be confused with: they can be confused with every single one. Sometimes this is moment to moment, and sometimes they may resemble one long-term only to shift for a multitude of reasons - even then, their imitations are often a cross stitch of many classes. Priests muddle the definitions of classes both by naturally existing, and through their own personal interpretations of themselves...yet, they were Priests beforehand and will be Priests afterwards. So, let's rip off some band-aids.

The way Priests latch on to their own headcanons over *everything else* a work has bugs me, but it's ultimately harmless. Identifying who they are is, however, often a bit off-center and omitting details, which others can notice. This is thrice as bad for Priests who are familiar with Homestuck, as they're well familiar with the system, likely got into it (for at least a month), and already made a conclusion. It doesn't hurt Hussie never made too bold a stance on it, and Jung's work is only theories. If you don't believe me taking it all too seriously...first, how'd you make it this far? Why did you? But, more importantly, it'd make it all the harder to accept an answer that wasn't in the book to start with.

Classes aren't just empowering - they hurt. They bind us. They are often inconvenient, and how we torture ourselves when no one else is around. If it's just "fun" and "sounds cool", you get incorrect answers, and obscure who you truly are. You're not a Witch just because you're a Wiccan (or just think Wiccans are cool); you're not a Bard just because you're detached; you're not a Thief because you like Vriska; you're not a Lord just because it's "the badass Master class"; you're not none of them because you're "SPECIAL"...but given where they are, and how they're handled in Homestuck, maybe Hussie would say so. I've got no patience for it. They're a type of person, they can be classified, and I'll do it here. And I will try to make it something worth holding to. What I said about Princes is more relevant to you than them: if you can't spot yourself, ask a friend. Truth might hurt, but it's a better building material.

PROPHETS: Priests might get lost in their way of doing things like Mages, but even if they manage thicker skin, they'll aim higher or lower, rarely knowing their limits. Really, a Mage who could do anything they want is more likely to buy an isolated cabin compared to world domination, and they never need anyone to know either. It is

an isolating life as a Priest, but Mages are at a comfortable state of belonging with something bigger than them - a personal ideology is different from personhood exempt from ideology. Priests may try to act without colouring outside the lines or “doing things incorrectly”. but while these awkward schisms of expectation *might* resemble a Mage’s weirdness, there isn’t a comfortable middle ground. Either the Priest tries to get everyone to do things their way, they quietly adopt someone else’s consensus, or they straight up leave - not the conversation, but the friendship. Mages are stable, and Priests will only resemble them if they haven’t begun to ramp themselves up *but* have recognized they have the capacity to do so.

Priests can listen like Seers, and often pride themselves for having all the answers, but they stumble if they don’t. Real Seers bluff certainty, juggling possibilities and shrugging off dead ends, but Priests are...particular. If they’re just casually talking, then acting Seer-ish is more an idle fascination, which can be disregarded or discarded as needs be. If they’re taking active pride in being a wellspring of information, being dead wrong tends to sour their mood, meaning they’ll either double down or give up. Really, they just overall lack the hunger for data that Seers do, and are far more interested in *their* paradoxical place in the world compared to everyone else’s harmony. More noticable from Seers is the habit of self destruction, but it’s not really a “haha don’t worry about it”. For one, they’re far less likely to *do* that in its entirety, as a focus on their self often leads to thoughts of self-preservation. If they are self-sabotaging, withering, isolating, or legitimately suicidal (please contact your local hotline), it tends to take on a martyrdom angle. Even if the world has no place for them, they will fixate on how they do not belong to it more than anything else.

They are the double-inverse, but the biggest differences are only if a Priest goes as loud as possible. The similarities are more pressing, especially starting out: everyone has a framework, a narrative, a story, but them. Or so it feels. Even a Witch of Void inverse would mean some structure, some pretense, but what a Priest has cooking is a very different kind of absence.

MAGICIANS: A Priest playing Witch is honestly a very safe and stable position for them, but it doesn’t mean they actually are the genuine article. Their levity is even more situational, and the dry apathy underpinning it is (potentially) *much* more demanding. They can try responding to that hollowness with something as simple as **changing** an shifting mass of imprecise fascinations, but a Witch of Space they are not. If they’re a very content Priest, there’s a similar wavelength, but you’re unlikely to confuse the two the more you meet...and besides, Priests get ambitious and involved way too easily. The more discontented they become, the less they can isolate and work alone, which means bigger circles for bigger plans.

It is so much faster to just say "One is AMAB and one is AFAB". I'm putting in the effort for *you*, so you better appreciate it.

Well if you need people, what about Heirs? Maybe. But trying to be the advice giver and diplomat is rather hollow without a Mage's center, and trying to empathize only highlights their dispassion and drifting interests - people's problems feel too much like distractions, irrational, boring. With the best of intentions and a genuine attempt to appeal, they can only keep the door open for vague optimism - Breath-y, more or less. However, if the appeal is dependency, on authority with plausible deniability ("just a concerned friend"), then it will lean more to doubt for the sake of doubt: questions of why something is so important, worth dying for, worth holding on to, Void without any true altruism. A modest Priest is often genuinely confused, but not always: asking you to move on from what? And move where, precisely? Yes, there's a certain symmetry with the worst Heir traits in becoming someone's first (and only) approver of information, but this trained helplessness from a real Heir is just so they can help eternally - Priests don't want to hear complaining, which makes a routine of *crisis* undesirable. The more they play this card and undermine others, the more concerning it should be that they have *any* of your best interests at heart.

I'm going somewhere with this.

Also, based on the amount of queer people who end up Priests (not all of them, and not all Priests, but alot), this might explain why some of them latched on the June headcanon. Not saying there aren't trans Heirs, but the consensus sticks out.

SERVANTS: Living in the shadow of your own impossible dreams and ideas of who you want to be is, if nothing else, kind of a bummer. Priests have many avenues to tackle their desires, but feeling helpless is understandable. This is a road that leads to Page-y traits of wistfulness and imploring, with an awkward exterior to laugh off the insanity of what you actually *want*. Priests playing the Page route can weaponize their self-pity, manipulate their friends into favours (god forbid romance), cry until they're carried to the finish line, and obscure their transgressions by focusing on their shortcomings...and, unfortunately, none of this is actually *beyond* true Pages. We They can be very treacherous individuals, so we cannot distinguish the two by sin alone...but we *can* tell the difference from language. Pages might recontextualize hedonism into heroism, but there are legitimately selfless calls to action at the same time. Unlike Priests (and alot of Lords), they will commit to things that don't make sense to them, to people they aren't even that fond of, in tasks they don't profit from. It may not be very often, but it reflects that a Page is being crushed by a steadfast outline of heroism, one they can readily describe - and Priests can't. Their want and ennui lacks a stable identity - a bound

aspect - and they will rely on other people to provide it for them, coveting something that catches their eye and deciding its "destiny". Pages only learn the lessons they want to learn, and adopt what they think they can improve or incorporate; the person they want to be is concrete to them, and the issue is the route there. Do not measure them in treachery, but in identity - after all, Priests are likely to drop the Page attitude altogether when it stops serving a purpose. Pages will be Pages regardless of who's watching, and manifesting themselves into something greater will be comprised of the same components that tortured them beforehand.

I keep thinking of Huey and Hal from Metal Gear. Worse since I knew someone like that.

He was cute. I definately had a crush on him. Didn't recognize it at the time. But he still made everything hell for me just because I wanted him to be better (and not racist)...and it didn't help the other main voice in that group was also a Priest. "Drama Queen". I was surrounded on all sides. Just wish I knew better. Guess I do now.

Knighthood, then? Devout to others, self-sacrificing, put others on a pedestal? Viable. I mean Priests can get awfully excited about where they want people to wind up, and being *aware* they're kinda twisted on the inside can spark some penitent ideas. It just doesn't click with how readily Knights are bossed around, or just *expect* to be. Derseites will lean into this harder, as Priests can find themselves pushing jokes too far, and using irony as a crutch to say nothing...but, it just ain't the same martyr complex. Knights push people away even at the best of times, with only a few layers of detachment hiding a very consistent playbook on helping people. Without that outline, without even *being* a passive class, Derse Priests often just have more layers of irony under their irony, which can become existentially terrifying.

Hussie always did say Dave was the easiest to write. That stuck with me. I mean long before this document, long before I got back into Homestuck, I still wondered what *his* class was. Derse, at least, felt obvious. "Waste" raises questions.

OUTLAWS: Latching on to fascinations and using it to define yourself is different to how Pages do it, but it *is* closer to how Thieves do. They're close competitors, and only two notches off, but Thieves are consistent; they fundamentally *have* an aspect, which restricts (and fuels) their lifelong passions compared to the omnivorous (and occasionally lazy) Priests. If that's hard to tell, the most solid proof will always be heirarchy: Priests can be patient (or content, occasionally) with little, yet gravitate to totality. Thieves *always* have fight in them: they'll chase dreams, voice their grudges, and obnoxiously boast whether it's advantageous to do so or not...and tend to keep to the sidelines, compared to real leadership. Maybe they don't think they're suited. Maybe they look fine on their own. Maybe they think they don't deserve it. Priests can act Thiefish contextually or Knightish contextually, but they omit the dichotomy and details:

Thieves have a functional axis of aspects, the rules that demand they conform, and their whole lives in protest. Thieves credit themselves on what they can steal, Priests just steal credit, and not even consistently enough to make it their defining shtick.

Being a "Thief of Light" means tying everything back into Light. It means knowing you're all about Light. It means that even if it takes effort and you're scared that someone will take it away, you'll settle into a Light phillosophy while employing Thieffy traits. I know there's similarities here, but the fundamentals are different...but maybe that's why Vriska (and Vriska-like characters) are so popular to certain people? It kind of glamorizes some of the more unpleasant attributes.

Playing "Rogue" isn't out of the question. Where the Heir touch is more of a red flag, this earnest, awkward, heartfelt uncertainty is hard to fake (but not impossible). It's unlikely a prideful Priest would admit to not having all the answers, but it *is* true that they lose themselves while being pulled by people's wills, and walk the edge of collapsing - from exasperation, mind you, not bashfulness. It's also still lacking the form of a proper aspect; true Void has rules, and while a kind Priest may contemplate sinking into nothing (briefly - "immortal fame" is still pretty consistent), they're still prone to wanting you to forget only *specific* things. Less what troubles you, more what troubles them, and blurring that line will get less Rogue-ish by the second. Rogues may never know who they are until they pull everyone away from the world, throwing away all the rules and making new ones...but, Priests are less trustworthy to pull the same gambit, and it's not going to "click" the same way either.

No seriously, if you read all of this, and no class stood out to you, and you're left going "I don't get it?", please check the mirror. I've had this conversation alot of times, and the ability to stare right in the face of one's habits and reputation, then come away with a blank look...well, with Rogues it's cute. With you guys, I get concerned (granted it's mostly Prospits, because of course it is). Everything mentioned so far is within the realm of "tame", but the capacity to go past this point and do some real fucking harm is always there. As for what KIND, that's up to the Priest in question.

FAE: As much as Priests have too many ideas that never get off the ground, that doesn't mean *they* won't get off the ground. Acting Maid-ish keeps Priests moving, and is a healthy state for them (so long as they don't tip over into Lord). Of course, the "living embodiment of their aspect, held together by beliefs so strong and saturated they seem alien"...well, Maids are pretty specific. They **create** more of their aspect because they refuse to live life outside its terms, and often become busy workers in a career that suits their shtick. For a Priest, either capitalist domination becomes their shtick (expect lots of quotes from ancient warlords and emperors), or they try to quit their 9-5 and go wild on *art*. Said art will be a lurid hodge-podge of personal childhood nostalgias, contrasting extremes of phillosophy, unrelated media references, outright plagiarism, their own personal existential ennui, and some kind of commentary (or integration) of whoever the audience is, and the author themselves. It's everything at

once, which ironically makes it even easier to specify than any of the 12 aspects on their own.

I always told her to write short stories. It bothered her she never finished anything, that was obvious. She tried measuring success in word count, and she was venomous if I was anything less than impressed with her about it. Short stories would've been fine, but what is it with Priests getting caught up in these insane ideas of a magnum opus?

Sylphs are a stranger pick. Priests might lend a hand, or become overly-involved in certain contexts, but it's held back by all their other fun personality quirks we've gone over. The simultaneously stable and unstable high-energy of Sylphs is a peculiar thing, and even Princes flirting with inversion can't (or, more realistically, "won't") imitate their personality traits wholesale. Priests prefer to work alone - maybe in a way that benefits everyone, definitely susceptible to suggestion, but not a fan of committee.

ROYALS: As previously stated, Priests are the elevation from Princes, with no defined substance of a bound aspect to hold them high, or hold them back. Of course, with Princes at odds with their compulsive cynicism and fragile idealism, their own identity is blurred at least half as bad as Priests - take that stick out from their ass, you're just left with an ass. Regardless of whether they rationalize their actions as "objective clarity" or not, a Prince's thinking underlines a lot of their actions; overwhelmed at a world brimming with over ideological thinking and distractions. Of course, this "backed into a corner" thinking is a projection of the supposedly "lucid" individual, where trying to boil life down into "objective correct approach to life that people can't make fun of me for" is as fallable as it is hypocritical. Whether it's money, power, sex, lineage, legacy, none of it matters unless you decide it matters, and all Priests have over Princes is less eating them alive at whatever conclusion they reach. So if they want to imitate that dispassionate apathy, the disapproval, the "above it all" attitude, it only blots out their ability to appreciate what they antagonize; all they've accomplished is changing "tortured genius" to "genius", and we've already established that either class shouldn't have too high an opinion of themselves. They're going to learn the hard way they're actually very dependent on other people's validation, and Priests are even more likely to see intimacy as an existential threat as Princes.

It's like a Prince of Heart, except more robotic and calculated. You know. In this fun hypothetical we're doing.

Then again, there's already a destroyer who stays out of their own sightlines: Bards. Priests who value stability may resemble a similar lackadaisical attitude, but stray on direction. Bards are *very* talkative, especially when they shouldn't be; Priests need to have a point, even

if they don't consciously realize it. Prospits might both have some casual complaining, but the Priests are trying to iron out legitimate irks and irritations, where Bards tend to talk for the sport of it. Dersites can both push jokes too far and veer into insensitive topics, but Derse Bards just sort of "even out", given enough time. Derse Priests converge towards an epiphany of realizing they're very empty inside, and being ironic and funny makes things more difficult to resolve. It's only a Maid's center that keeps Bards so self-assured, and Priests *are* their center.

Malicious Priests are still prone to employ Bard-like traits in order to downplay consequences of their actions, or to cast doubt on competing sources of truth. Course, a real Bard of Rage argues for the sake of itself, and with a Maid of Hope's guidance; it's different if you're shutting out every truth but yourself for the sake of consolidating power. "Don't listen to the experts, only I know how the real world works".

The first time I posted this brochure to Reddit, someone said they identified with Bard beforehand but my stuff on Priests really shook them. I prodded them about it, but they ended with "Yeah probably Bard, nevermind." It wasn't a long conversation, but I'm not sure. Why would a Bard's faith in themselves hinge on labels?

MASTERS: Lords have a consistency to them - rain or shine, rich or poor, they take the world on their terms alone, with an uncompromisingly strong self-identity. Driven by passions, most imagine a wide range of projects to pursue; while many are unrealistic or unfeasible, Lords may still reach those goals through determination or delusion, and those they don't will remain in their minds for a long time. While Priests lack these boundless reserves of self-reliance (and are *anything* but consistent), their "true north" points in the same direction of a singular visionary, total and absolute. Course, Lords can defuse, and even ambitious Priests may never have the opportunity to reach that high...but through enough vigor (or, more realistically, inheritance), you can with up with a ruthless autocrat, building their "magnum opus" while disdainful of any competing voice. Both are assholes, but they're both fundamentally different assholes.

Look, seriously, if you're a Priest (or Lord?) who made it this far, thank you, but I need you to emotionally detach here. We're talking some SERIOUS live wires here. If it seems a far cry from yourself, *good*. Just don't get complacent...or, stay complacent, I guess?

As previously stated, Lords are consistent - if their self-aggrandizing gets out of hand, everything else follows in equal measure. Rage, heartbreak, joy, irritation, sympathy, bigotry, genuine poetry or bile - all genuine, all uncensored, all a part of their cohesive worldview. Contrasting that, faux-Lord Priests are dependent on their audience, saying whatever gets them ahead or makes sense in the moment - con artists, really. Trying to get a Lord to cooperate is tricky; they don't compromise, they like hearing themselves talk, and they're not patient. You might win their respect by agreeing with everything they

say, talking back to them, or punching them in the face. With a Priest (at this level), it's *only* agreeing with everything they say - they accept no other outcome. Lords have a take-it-or-leave-it stream of consciousness that only makes sense if you squint and give them a huge benefit of the doubt - in contrast, Priests pivot, enrapture, sweet-talk. Sure, they always contradict themselves eventually, lie about something too obvious or forget a previous lie...but the longer they talk, the more they get their hooks in. To say nothing of value, but everything you want to hear.

I still don't know if Priests even HAVE an aspect, but they do take on very minute characteristics at this degree of persona. A threadbare theme of maybes, if you squint. I still couldn't tell you if it's a sign of something static, or just a temporary favourite, and I wouldn't trust Priests to tell you either.

Also, remember how I mentioned Johnny Silverhand? Put him next to Saburo Arasaka, tell me who's the Lord, let ALONE Timebound? Really, if we're using the stock classes Hussie put in front of us, how do you reconcile the two? Cause both talk *alot* about immortality...

And *why*? What's the endgame? The point? Priests veer Time-wise, sure, but it's unrecognizable because it's not universal - conquest, not competition. They're even worse than Lords at admitting fault; they can't defer to experts, can't admit they don't know something, can't let a competitor (or collaborator) outshine them, and they can't admit even the *tiniest* mistake. It's always someone else's fault, or "didn't happen", or "more complicated than that" (it's not), and any recording will prove them a liar. Sure, their lies are better than "NO I DIDN'T", but a Lord's shoddily-constructed lies and denials are because they only need to convince themselves - intricacy is a Priests downfall, as there are limits to building multiple houses of cards with every new person you meet. Every misstep or accusation requires more excuses for anyone still listening, bloating into an increasingly isolated delusion; the **only** voice of reason, the **only** one who gets it, telling you not to trust anyone or anything outside their bubble, lest you be "manipulated" and led astray. If you're that removed from reality, you can't correctly interact with it, resulting in failure which only begets more delusion and more failure. If anyone disentangles from their orbit, Priests only put more pressure on whoever's left, desperate to not lose their remaining sources of validation. **Ultimately, Priests have a dependency to others for feeling "normal" no matter what their state of egomania. Lords lack the tools or self-awareness to stop people leaving, and won't miss a beat until literally everyone is gone.** It's a doomed effort for Priests to try and sustain this kind of audience, but enough capital or diehard supporters will let them lash out for a lifetime, rather than cut their losses and be *happy*.

Ego from Guardians of the Galaxy 2 was always...uncomfortably familiar. We see how readily he rewrites his world from the slightest inconvenience, and how full of himself he is. He is desperate to not be alone - but the legitimate connection, the **dependency** he

was growing towards Quill's mom scared him so much he burned it out, lest it threaten his worldview. He'll be, do, and say anything to keep your attention (besides apologize), and write his world any way he wants to draw you in and make you orbit his life advice. A more human example would be Jonas Venture, with both shining as awful fathers. Still, both feel like the Prospit variants. You want a Derse one?

Doc Scratch.

English might've been made of the same components, and shown the intent, but Scratch is all the personality and justifications. All the undermining, all the disarming, all the absolutes. It's...well, familiar. To me, sure. Maybe you know someone personally, or are a Derse Priest and have been that cruel before (if so, thanks for sticking with this despite the clear lack of flattery). But you catch Hussie's public statements and the workplace confessions that get out...hell. "Symphony of Desolation". It all lines up too well.

...And, of course, there's a Priest's true south: Muses. As much as they have a tendency to present as wallflowers and woobies, they're still the inversion. Both classes are bound to the group, the whole, the Big Picture, their quiet blameless witnessing of the world. They interpret the will of the many, latch on to those ideas, and insist on working alone...so what makes Priests so volatile? Muses often seem content with being forgotten and stepped on, and often phrase their weaknesses and limitations (often exaggerated) in the language of their opposed aspect; they're the most passive class there is, an extreme of human possibility. We've already established Priests don't have much to hold on to and define themselves, (even the bigshots *define* themselves by their closest relationships, showing they have no imagination or purpose without them) but recontextualizing their goals with a Muse underpinning paints a fuller picture...and explains why a few Muses can go a little power-crazy without consciously realizing what they're doing.

Transwomen who are Priests (again, alot, not all, don't @ me) can adopt Muse mannerisms near flawlessly, only being a little more fidgety. They generally don't before transitioning (societal pressure, I'd imagine), but that's the nature of Priests - malleability. I mean it's barely even a mask, it's just inversion, everyone does that. Derse Priests seem to do it more consciously, which seems to make them more anxious. Prospits kinda just vibe. All in all, it honestly makes them significantly safer than the more disastrous Priest possibilities we've discussed...guess Lords and Faux-Lords are both coded pretty masculine in the collective consciousness. Ugh. People make too big a deal over gender, I swear to god, just move the fuck on.

On the other hand, maybe "south" and "north" are the wrong ways to look at it? Arguing any class's "true purpose" hinges on agreed failstates (which, so far, have been unfulfilment and toxicity). It's true that many Priests lash out at the world, driven by envy and lack, forgetting good intentions they may have had, building a house of cards of lies and manipulations...but that's a misfiring Muse impulse, isn't it? That **command** of ideas, *without* respecting what you're doing to the people around you...there are too many despots (metaphorical and otherwise) who "interpret the will of the people" for their own agenda. Remember, being a dick isn't a requirement; there are Priests who shift praise away from themselves and on to their following, finding a fascination with "Death of the Author"

concepts and letting communities do their own thing (to say nothing of parenthood). It's very Muse-y, but is this from overcoming self-loathing, or submitting to it? It's not like they can't relapse, either, so what can you do? What can you say?

Alt-Calliope isn't a fluke. Real Muses can learn to throw their weight around with an unnerving certainty. It's not coming from nowhere.

A Muse's broken pride is no different than a Sylph's fragile pride - for fuck's sake, if there's fixes for Princes, then there's fixes for Priests. Helping them will already help Muses, who often aren't sure how to vocalize their disagreements healthily - or at all. Hell, stealing credit isn't past some Muses, so it's not like there isn't some lust for praise buried in there somewhere. There is an impulse to believe everything other people stand for, and an impulse to direct these beliefs for everyone's "best interest" - to **command** these thoughts, and **transform** them into something else. Muses rarely dare to try the second, but it's not past them, and it's not always a bad thing either. For Priests, the weight is higher; all aspects surrounding them, all voices, all at once, threatening to drown them - so drink it. The only way out is through. Be everyone. Be yourself. Write your own damn story.

It's frustrating that every Priest has their own rationalization for why they are the way they are. Narcissism, sociopathy, autism, schizotypal, multiple personality disorder...okay I really don't believe that one, but the guy who said it believed it. Classes don't match personality disorders, there's too many cases of mismatches and exceptions...but I also don't know if every single Priest's ennui can be attributed purely to being a Priest. I'm not a psychologist. Not everyone talks enough. It's frustrating.

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Sage among the simple; shephard to the sheep; mortal surrounded by Gods - either wreathed or would-be. The adventures of those empowered and enamoured all shift reality to meet them, all schism long before they practice praxis and participate in the grand paradox. To you, the true essence of what makes myth is unambiguous at the price of privilege; cut off from the source, deprived and hungry. Spurned by circumstance, setting up shop with sermons, serendipitous, serene, is the Siphon; the Witness; the Interpreter; the Priest. Pulled in every direction but unable to reach, you preach; every destination past the other side, every individual will in the forces of nature, every Kingdom of every Heaven you don't belong to, doomed to only the outline of a dodecagon...but if you believe nothing, you can believe anything. With pen, you write prayer; in the face of the impossible, you ascribe intent. What will you write then? You, who can enraupture civilizations or console the troubles of a single soul? Who can tell any lie, or the purest truths? To make men anew, or break them into thralls? If you burn all the books and shut out all the light, you can say

there is no Heaven on Earth but what you built...but you know the routes, the paths, that all will find eventually. You can lead them there halfway on your own, but they can bring you the rest - a taste of something pure, but only when you surrender control entirely. They will be Gods, and they may be more generous than you expect.

"Absence diminishes little passions and increases great ones, as wind extinguishes candles and fans a fire." - Walt Whitman

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SCRIBES are difficult to describe without offense. A medley of traits associated with multiple passive classes, drawn to excitement and new ideas, all run on a very short fuse; likely to say they "won't be pushed around anymore", and likely to have pasts where they were. They champion people they care about, becoming fans to their creative projects or life story, priding themselves on understanding and empathy. Scribes have a proclivity to healing in all it's forms, doing what they can to make conclusions on what can be learned (or who should be blamed) for all misfortune that finds them or their group. Direct, optimistic, playful, bold, but this engine locked at 11 quickly runs out of fuel; frequent burnouts, a "lack of spoons", swimming out to save the drowning but rarely having the strength to swim back. Temper exasperates issues, with a thin line between ultimate empath and irritated apathy - a single argument can break relationships beyond repair, and their support comes at the price of working within their frameworks. Scribes underestimate the threat of these resentments and overestimate their follow-through, frequently overpromising and chasing fascinations. They are never too fond to have this pointed out to them, and are likely to downplay these qualities into things that everybody experiences...but the dynamics they cultivate and chase are identifiable. Others could point it out best for them, but Scribes try to figure out what everyone else is thinking by themselves - which is a little dangerous.

If Priests are the most passiveish active, then you wouldn't be too off calling these guys the most active-y passive. I'm pretty confident on the name, but it's still a lot of uncharted territory - still, I'm 100% certain of their existence. Met more than a few in my life, and some are still around. They seem pretty comfy being assumed as one of the others...which makes my strategy of "harsh highlights" both very effective in spotting them and very ineffective in being accepted. I promise I'm doing my best to reach out, but that still means more harshness.

Scribes have their personality, politics, irritations and anecdotes all smushed together into a single worldview - yet, this isn't their focus.

The pride in reading the situation and understanding of “how the world works” needs a point, and that means bringing it to as many people as possible; Scribes seek to **transform** the aspects of others, excitedly bouncing ideas around, hyping them up, and trying to set friends straight with no-nonsense life advice. Of course, they *are* the point past a Bard for a reason, and their open communication doesn’t mean they’re not destructive; more than mischief, Scribes delve into lots of topics many would consider sensitive or off-limits, and often struggle with understanding why they should apologize. They reinvent themselves as much as Priests, latching on to fascinating concepts and ideas, but their excitement exploring them often turns sour quickly if there’s disagreement; they make some pretty sweeping statements, but can become futzy on what is and isn’t subjective, and the harm that comes from misleading information. They’re confident in their place in their place in the world, and focus their efforts on boosting others up - still “time-ish”, aspect-less vague concepts of “more” and “louder”, but with everyone else as the focal point. It’s just important (to them) that they give a stamp of approval on what’s fought for.

No, seriously, *really* fond of AU fiction, it’s like universal.

For the record, in the interest of academia, they seem AFAB - and like Priests, more than a few I know are gender-questioning in some manner, so I don’t want anyone running wild with this shit and being a dickhead. I’ve got my eyes open for exceptions, as always; if there are none, then it’s just another vestigial leftover in people’s personal quests.

It would be a disservice to simply say the biggest risk here is being overbearing, or a tendency to start group projects they immediately lose interest in. Scribes have a darkness to them, more cleanly split than Priests, and much more uncensored. They can dump years-long friendships over a single argument, or defend very sketchy people, and it all seems to depend on which side of the bed they woke up on; it’s fine to have bad days or exceptions, but it takes priorities over all philosophy and promises made beforehand. A Scribe’s fickle nature is not disguised by a Bard’s lazy smile, and the moments of true belief are more fragile: without application, it is all talk. They rarely understand the subtleties of what they’re talking about, emulating it only highlights they hollowed it out, and calling them out reveals only bile. They have topics they won’t touch, preconceptions they refuse to hear a counter-argument for, and the wild over-confidence they display comes crashing against reality in a way they will politely ask you to ignore. There is a familiar argument employed of false moral equivalencies, of exasperated compromises they decide on your behalf, of “refusing to be silent anymore” when no one asked them to, of only apologizing if they can invent a reason for someone else to, and of reducing serious issues down to “You just hate me having an opinion”. When taken as a whole, in what they present and what they

simmer on, it all paints a gray, nihilistic slodge of moral oblivion. Scribes can do a lot of beautiful things, but this violence they have in things going any less than perfect for them leaves their friends with eggshells, and leaves them with even less.

I said it before and I'll say it now, if there's a way to escape classpects, I'd prefer to. As it stands, I'm trying to find solutions when there isn't a Scribe alive who's comfortable being analyzed.

I am happy with Scribe, but you wouldn't be crazy calling them "Queen" to compliment a Priest's "King". Again, too many LGBTQ types, and I still think it gives the wrong impression. You're welcome to disagree, so long as we're clear what class we're talking about - that isn't going anywhere.

Prospit Scribes could make an argument for being every class listed thus far, and probably Derse too, if it was suggested to them. This malleability and confidence invariably makes them the more dangerous of the two, however. "Not hiding your emotions" makes them very powerful presences in a room, despite their comfortability following the lead of others. They are confident in what they'll say to soothe people, but unashamed if that's not enough. They're deliberate in their philosophy, to the point of rarely changing their opinions about *anything*, and occasionally going wildly off-base in what they think people want or are saying. Exasperating this, they've got a lot of venom primed and ready to go. They have rules; boundaries that cannot be crossed, and topics that cannot be brought up. There's much more dangerous potentialities out there, but Prospit Scribes crossed have the most white-hot fury a human being can have. It's not all they are, but reconciling it is important for recognizing the good they can do: they can imitate any specific or combination of support classes to solve anyone's problems. If that's not good enough, most are prepared to be bitter, but you can't get better at something if you don't admit there's room for improvement.

One of my closest friends in the world was a Prospit Scribe. We don't talk much anymore. I've heard enough similar stories, and I know others who I also maintain a distanced relationship with. You want a media example? It's hard. Again, they're tricky to spot. I do have suspicions on that one girl from Monogatari, but I think the most "readily apparent" is Zoe from Monster Prom. Like, 1-1, really, straight down to loving AU fics.

Derse Scribes have no idea what they're "all about", but compensate with a mirthful, oddball energy. Their willingness to play irritating punchline rings close to Derse Knights, but without the martyr complex; they don't feel a need to hide their true feelings (mostly), only to ridicule the existence of them. Temper is still an issue, but Derse Scribes often manage this in quick bursts, gone as quickly as it arrived. All of this results in trailing behind extreme personalities, childish glee, stubbornness that surprises people, and a lot of awkward uncertainty about themselves they'd rather stuff down. Not taking themselves too seriously seems to round them out; indignant tempers

lack the fuel to last, grudges can be second-guessed or downplayed, and dictating the terms of “what will and won’t be spoken of” is too sporadic to hold permanence. Still, even if it’s with laughs and shrugs, they’re still entirely capable of burning as many bridges as any Scribe, while shutting out the part they had to play in it. It isn’t easy asking them to do more, but the option is there.

Chie.

A few other people I met. But definately Chie from Persona 4.

Possibly Entrapta from She-Ra. Could be Prospit. Or just written inbetween the two.

IDENTIFICATION: Scribes have an incredibly fluid sense of identity, and a penchant for latching on to shiny things as much as Priests. This habit of saying “I get it” when they don’t get it, of trying to finish someone’s sentences incorrectly...well, naturally, they probably already have opinions of what class they are, and are twice as likely to say they’re some variation of “non-applicable”. Putting them side by side with another class is always a depressing venture; too social to be a Witch, too ambitious and encouraging to be a Seer, too aggressive and irritable to be a Rogue (let alone a Muse), too agreeable to be a Maid, too aware of their breaking points to be a Knight, too susceptible to their breaking points to be a Sylph. Scribes susist on fascinations, excitements, flings, whims, where other classes are born of convictions they won’t shake for their entire lives; no matter how close they could be in a moment, no matter how “cool” it sounds, they just can’t *stick* to it. Only pick the parts of the blueprints you like, and there’s no structure - no structure, and it falls over if you try to build up. Scribes are infamous for throwing in the towel too quickly just because they got on the wrong side of bed, and comparing themself to the dogmatic and principled (which has a host of downsides, if you haven’t been paying attention) is going to hurt every time.

With everything they’re likely to have gone through, I’m sure an argument is “No, I have to be X class but hardened by trauma.” Unfortunately, classpects ARE our trauma.

Still, just because they’re the second pinnacle of adaptation, and just because they imitate so much (if not really so “well”), it doesn’t mean they’re formless. Scribes might not have a true “bound” aspect, but that lack of variation means they’re essentially uniform. They often end up in the same “Just let me have this” fickle fraility of Priests, but that razor thin faux-Timehood is pushed to everyone else...and yet, that often means wanting everyone to win “equally”, still averse to high-stakes competition (and perhaps a bit of a sore loser). They talk about healing but at *their* pace, even to the point of glacial stagnation. Everything is an opinion, the material world can be ignored, and these sweeping statements too often benefit however they’re feeling today.

Prospits stand by these statements more boldly, but in both stripes, there's still a Lord of Space..."ish".

There's so much hatred in their hearts. I don't know how to approach it.

LORDS: Is there even anything to say? Lords are famously terrible at compromise, hooking people in with excitement despite their tendency to throw people under the bus, preaching only ideas that serve them. They think the whole world revolves around them most days, and what does that say about Scribes? It's hard enough to give any constructive advice to Lords, and Scribes along with them. They both do their own thing, promise too much, languish about (and occasionally embellish) the horrible things that happened to them. Of course, Lords are beacons of self-confidence, but that generally comes with talking about how great they are, what exclusively about what excites them, and all the hot sex they're having. Certain Scribes seem happy flirting with these attitudes, but it's...abrasive, at best. A personal solution that doesn't remedy the difficulty that can come with their relationships - which, as a passive class, is still their focal point. They are, at least, the most active of passive classes...so, maybe that's enough? Maybe you really do have to let them have their own thing sometimes, and maybe the advice to recommend is for them to see more than their connections. Maybe.

If nothing else, we keep the door open. We work from what is, but we chase all we want to be, and even moreso if we know it's there to be caught.

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I am exhausted.

You finished this. You know every class now. With more experience in the real world, you can get better at telling them apart. And yourself.

What's left is two things: my current thoughts on Andrew Hussie and the meaning of Homestuck, and a last scattering of confessions of my life and what I hope this all accomplishes. Hopefully, between the two of them, you'll find something to take with you.

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A WILD STAB IN THE DARK
(LIFE OF THE AUTHOR)

In the face of everything, all of it, Homestuck is often a comic about ships, theories, memes, and gray skin paint. While arguing about classpects is a pastime, it's weighed down by two factors: first, most people would rather pick classes that "sound" cooler rather than settle into a pre-existing role...and secondly, that this is any more than fiction is a bit of a leap. I mean I get it. He's got no doctorate here, so why would he even have anything to offer? And why obfuscated behind an obtuse webcomic?

Let's answer a question with a question: how do you think he got to all this? Look, I haven't had the chance to read all the director commentary in the Homestuck print books, but I haven't heard it circulated what Hussie's process was - in fact, his early life is pretty quiet online. I've made it very clear I already presume Hussie to be a Derse Priest, but I'm also well aware he ironically (if there's any meaning to the word left) called himself a "Waste of Space". He did, however, say that he spoke(texted?) similarly to Dave, and transitioned to Dirk's text later. Dave was always "the most natural" to him. But here's another thing: he *had* to have been exactly as analogous to Rose at the same time. I know this because I have.

Do I even have to describe a Seer of Light, or have we all been paying attention? To study and steady, in unbiased observation, the narratives and (presumed) destinies of others - their stories and conclusions, good and bad, **and without being held to the same grip of those narratives**. Important, sure; more important, Rose is characterized early on as someone who obsessively psychoanalyzes her friends, playing therapist and studying their behavior (a trait mostly downplayed as things go on, which rarely "fires" like a Checkov's ought to). Without ever meaning to, I found myself doing the same in an effort to find the truth in this mess of medieval cosplay; prodding others with questions, careful not to push too far or give too much away, playing it off with a derse touch of self deprecation when things got awkward. Course, I'm still a Page, and a nervous wreck doing all of that...but how else would Hussie have *figured out* everything he did? Would he not have the reputation of mysterious psychoanalyzing, much to the chagrin of friends? Could half of those reading RESIST the curiosity of cracking their friends heads open, and studying the intricate repeating patterns of conviction and compulsion?

Take it a step further; a Priest is, if anything, Time-ish-bound. To consider oneself a Knight isn't a terrible assessment for someone trying to encourage others with a blunt, direct and dry efficiency - an expectation it's what they need, even if no one asked. Hell, wouldn't even be that far to regard one's own "time-related needs" as something to sacrifice, too selfish to consider. Not necessarily the same way as a Knight would...but close. I said earlier I believed Lord English to be an analogy of the worst characteristics; *if so*, is an Heir of Breath not alarmingly similar to an Heir of Void? Breath and Void move in similar ways, though forgiving and forgetting a problem have different applications and a stark contrast of nobility; moreso, the gaslighting of a truly dangerous Priest had a darker, more cautious edge...but Equius is the Derse one of the two, wasn't he? John was more honest. Maybe Andrew hoped he was, at least once.

And if all 3 of these states are viable, and it's obvious you aren't running any of the same "scripts" as your friends, then a Witch of Space's personal malleability of creative expression is RIGHT on the money, ain't it?

Now like I said, I can relate to Rose, and that is from the circumstances. There's reason to guess, maybe, hypothetically, the beta kids are a conglomerate of Hussie's childhood ennui - but the Alpha kids? REALLY look at the Classpect system, see the potential to "resolve" people of avoidable internal strife, and you wind up in a pretty similar place. Stand for yourself, **struggling to uphold and embody an inspiring message**. Everyone around you depressed? **Fight the world until it resembles the stability you want**, even if you can barely contain it under the guise of negotiation. They get caught up with the rest of their lives, who they think they are and how the world works? **Tell them to forget. Tell them to let go**. Not an Heir's touch...something more to risk, something more heartfelt and vulnerable, even if it's more honest that the problem hasn't gone away - you're just saying **it doesn't matter, and it doesn't have to a part of your story**. They get huffy? Jesus, why? You just offered them hope, life, and eased the journey there. Yeah, maybe they've got **stubborn gut feelings about who they are**...but isn't that enough to make one irritated, even if you try to pretend you're just nobly sacrificing for them? Really, they're gonna get passionate and say being misreable is just "who they are"? You know better. You know them better than they know themselves, and you've got the paperwork to prove it, the ungrateful idiots. Rip that band aid off - **destroy it**.

It's the perfect recipe for transforming your friend group into an unstoppable gnostic-themed unit of self-actualization and purpose...until you actually cook the recipe. It

turns out, if you try to condense all these ideas of perfection and spiritual decadence into a concentrated package, then force feed that to someone, the results might scare you.

Maybe real people work differently than that.

I've had to learn that. And now I find myself wondering, precariously, if Hussie went through these exact same paces; I followed his notes, tried to draw a better map, and wind up walking through his exact footsteps...but did he turn around here?

The Cherubs are, beyond a shadow of a doubt in my mind, Hussie himself. A religious homage, analogies for the split fanbase, a villain ex machina, maybe that too - but I'll put money on it being Andrew first and foremost. Priests are the direct inverse of a genuine Muse (and yeah, Space-ish), and what better analogy for inversion could there POSSIBLY be? And does that not raise a hundred fiery questions on Calmasis, the enigmatic pseudo-union of the two, drawn almost identical to Hussie's own comic insert - irrelevant to the main comic beyond Hussie's comic self dressing as them? Of course, while Priests do emulate a Lord of Time if they do nothing but ramp themselves up, it's imperfect to the real thing - they are dispassionate, dishonest, and disguised. I already covered that. Maybe now it makes more sense: 8 human faces, all with struggles and doubts, all roles used up a twisted theatre show - both webcomic, and perhaps a real human life. Behind it all, a chimeric demon of 4 evils: a ruthless monster, a soulless robot, a manipulative pervert, and an insane clown who thinks he's a king.

But what to make of it then? Caliborn takes over a body of two, but the other side still wins in the end? The kids...still, make it, and make their own world, are the dreambubbles still analogous to fanworks? Homestuck is just Hussie(x4) vs Hussie + Hussie(x4) + Hussie(x4)? Well, to be fair, it would explain why he wanted people to name the characters themselves. Hell, how much is English a metaphor for Priests and how much Hussie himself, if Gamzee is a component? The man IS a Capricorn, and my own anecdotes of people I know and my own father only go so far. What about all the characters dating each other and going through their own business? What is the natural progression of these impulses made into self-sustaining characters with arcs in the purpose of entertaining fiction, and what is autobiographical confessions?

I have no answers to where the lines are, I'm afraid. I can say with relative certainty (and I suppose it's your call how much you believe me, which is fair) that Hussie's self-insert antics are the tip of a truly imposing iceberg of mindful self indulgence, but I cannot tell you his full intention. At the same time, we're not idiots here - we can establish a few things. That he finished this. That past the jokes, it meant something to him. That he did, at least once, care about using this system to help people; that might require some faith, but I truly don't see how he could've written *that story* with the Alpha Kids, and not been in the position I (and perhaps someday, you) are in. The direct approach has limits - the Muse won. He gave everyone the toolset, but skipped half the labels and burned the instructions...now I have the audacity to think that cowardice, and publicly admit it's wisdom I only *hope* is misplaced.

He wasn't a licensed professional, sure, but that only explains the format - not the point. Maybe he thought spelling it out was unsustainable, and danced around it to pique curiosity without lecturing? Maybe he just wanted to tell his story, broken dreams and all? As an old friend of mine used to say: "A little of column A, a little of column B."

So here's a thought: how much SHOULD we care what he says?

<https://blog.giovanh.com/blog/2020/10/03/the-hiveswap-fiasco/>
<https://blog.giovanh.com/blog/2021/01/14/hussie-exploited-the-odd-gentlemen-backers/>
<https://archive.vn/CgeSz>

After all of this, I have to admit I'm currently rather burned out of Homestuck. Not from it's bad takes (even if I should) but just feeling skeeved out at the man's behavior and terrible management. I mean it really is the sum of our inevitable parasocial relationships in this modern world, to feel an attachment to these figures without knowing them; still, even your real friends can disappoint, so maybe we're all shit as a species. I accept the folly. Accept my brain is malleable and fallible. It's just disappointing to watch someone veer into duplicitous autocracy after writing a story about knowing better. Is this a relapse, or was his takeaway more a compromise than I hoped? All I know is, the more I dig in to quotes and such, the more I recognize. I hope, maybe the more you will too, from people you know, people I've spoken of, and maybe people you are.

At the end of the day, despite *everything*, Homestuck is a pretty great webcomic. Hussie, despite the kind of fickle attention span that's doomed every other of his archetype trying to write a grand epic, made something worth the investment while finding fame and fortune. Maybe that changed him. Maybe he never changed. Regardless of intent, people have and always will take what they like about Homestuck, as a smorgasbord of ideas and concepts that invites collaboration and wonderment, a tribute to the endless potential of the human soul. If the man himself comes out of his hole and gives a tell-all, would it matter? Hell, I wouldn't even believe most of it at this point. He talks alot about the comic being out of his hands, but I think it is even more than he knows.

Hussie's a genius. He's also, currently, a shitty businessman prone to betrayal and spiteful cruelty, in securing his power and stepping on anyone close to competition, all while refusing to acknowledge the hard work of the people involved in his empire. He might settle out to something more agreeable, he might not. I think it does me good to not worry too much about him, beyond a sincere thank you for the work he did and the positive impact it had on my life. Hopefully, to those reading this, and certainly those in a similar position of dissatisfaction with the fandom, one can find solace in salvaging and surviving. It's not perfect. Nothing ever is, because nothing can be perfect to everyone. So take what you can from Homestuck in the weaving of your own story, trash the rest, and don't be surprised that someone else focused on something else - even if they're still *wrong* about classpects.

SOME WORDS IN CLOSING

(WE'LL MEET AGAIN, DON'T KNOW WHERE, DON'T KNOW WHEN)

I've rewritten this section many, many times. I've had ideas on what I wanted the closing statement to be before I even finished writing all the classes - hell, before I discovered (rediscovered?) the bonus two. I already released an earlier version on Reddit in a haze, and it's still nagging at me that it wasn't good enough. I've redone everything, and I wonder how much I'll still tinker with, and how much I'll come back to these words as well. Maybe I'll trash it all again - I mean you could fill a book just with all the different epilogues I've written here.

Alot of it was about my dad. It's hard for it not to be. Man's a Priest for sure, and I'm what he asked for - just, not what he wanted. I'm wimpy, I'm indecisive, but...there's just limits on how much one can justify reckless destruction, how much good you can make of it. He asked for rules. He always justified his hypocrisies with this illusion of structure, invented a method to the madness that kept changing. I listened, and I clearly heard something right - Page of Time, Rogue of Space, believe in violence and fight beliefs. I'm the sum of his excuses, as broken as his explanations, the mimicry of his posturing made genuine. Hell, my brother's still an Heir of Breath, what does that say?

I'm trying to define myself, and I've ended up with the words of someone who probably isn't that different. How much of these ideas do I own? How much do I want to own? I get so swept up in ideas of others, but I hate being pulled in so many directions at once when I can't find equilibrium - there's a truth in there, something pure, something Priests don't have. Even then, I've had my soul up for sale too often, and given myself over to people I shouldn't, trying to be everything they wanted. If I'm left to my own devices, my thoughts don't make sense even to me, and I don't even feel like I exist. There's just some middle ground there, where everything's bouncing around but I can take stock of what I'm trying to put together.

It's why the poetry is here. It's the only time I've ever written poetry. I've blanked, every other time, and freaked out. I can academically do a rhyming scheme, but it's cold and mathematical - it's not me. I recognize what's not me because there is a me, and most of that's best expressed in smashy violence poetry. I need that. It, and the whole style of the brochure. The scattershot, the disembodiment, the depersonalization. That's me. I really do hope this helps people, but I need this for me too.

Look, Classpects aren't all we are - they're important, sure, but like mental disorders and physical disabilities, they're just things we live with. I think it makes more sense to romanticize them, because they're so often our mechanism *to* romance, you know? But hesitantly, not so much we don't understand the burden. Just please understand, I meant everything I said. When we understand they're impulses, we can make them more; the more we understand they're subjective, the better we can "sell" other people on them.

Isn't that all life is? Negotiation? Or is that projection on my part? Am I wrong? We're surrounded by thinkpieces, advertisements, propoganda, literature, tombstones, all fighting each other on "What it's all about". It's a fight because you can win if someone agrees with you. If those are the terms, why are we fighting? If we can believe anything we want, why believe anything at all? Nihilism is its own metanarrative, as much as anything. A conclusion implies a problem, implies a proccess, implies *alot*. Why the hell do we keep overhyping some "search for meaning"? What if there was an objective truth to life? Call it God, call it wahtever - what if it *didn't* work for you? What if it made you uncomfortable, what if you weren't a part of it? Who the fuck decides anything? For the liars selling anything to get ahead, what other narrative are they buying where it's worth it? Money and power? Who the fuck are you trying to impress?

We all have opinions, and reailty is the only dream we all share without a choice. It's not everything, but it is the staging ground. It's where we meet people, where we share the new, where we argue around the inarguable. Some people act like all that matters is materialism, money, sex, and some people act like all that matters is sticking your head in the clouds. Isn't there such a thing as balance? Can't we just make use of what we have instead of trying to decide what's "evil"? The opinions I've laced this document with are "be excellent to each other", "treat others the way you want to be treated", and "treat yourself the way you treat your friends". I am willing to stand by those, certainly to the friends I care about. I ain't going to take over the world with it, and I don't plan to. It is just not worth the hassle, and it doesn't solve anything.

Look, just stop worrying so much, okay? Don't fall apart because someone doesn't agree with you, and don't fall apart yourself just because you might be wrong - not even a prideful thing, you could even be wrong about how bad you think you are. Don't run from the ugly. Don't run from pain, and suffering, and "uncomfortable" thoughts. We learn, we brace for it, we make a choice what we will or won't fight through, and who we'll fight for or against. There is always a choice, and we don't need some pretty idea of "objectivity" to back us up, when all it does is distract us from our responsability. We choose what we believe, and without some "universal good", we're stuck trying to justify ourselves to the people we want to justify it to. We are our own Gods. We can be good ones, and it's up to you to decide what that is. Certainly, at least, I can try and push you to not run from the happiness you're scared to accept, or screw people over in a way you'll feel guilty about later. That if we cannot accept the things we can't change, that someone else might have the tools to do so; that if we don't accept the way things are, that we could ever notice what we can overpower.

At the risk of projecting, we're all mimics. We all take ideas from other people, and our classpects are shared at our discretion. We hold onto wisdom from other mouths, and you can still feel the heat from when it burned in their hearts. Same with stories, same with old books, same with this dumb document. We don't need them with us to be a part of us, and that is a fact.

Face tomorrow unafraid.